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A N  
E X T R A C T  
From an Earnest and Serious  
A N S W E R  
T O  
Dr. *Trapp's* Discourse,  
O F T H E  
FOLLY, SIN, *and* DANGER  
O F B E I N G  
Righteous over - much.

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A N  
E X T R A C T

From an Earnest and Serious

A N S W E R, &c.



RIGHT I follow the *Bent* of my own Mind, my *Pen*, such as it is, should be wholly employed in setting forth the infinite Love of God to Mankind in Christ Jesus, and in endeavouring to draw all Men to the Belief and Acknowledgment of it. This *one great Mercy* of God, which makes the *one only* Happiness of all Mankind, so justly deserves all our Thoughts and Meditations, so highly enlightens, and improves every Mind that is attentive to it, so removes all the Evils of this present World, so sweetens every State of Life, so enflames the Heart with the Love of every divine and human Virtue, that he is no small Loser, whose Mind is, either by *Writing* or *Reading*, detained from the View and Contemplation of it.

When this Mystery of Divine Love was first manifested to the World, it produced its proper Effects, it put an End to all *Selfishness* and *Division*; for *all that believed were of one Heart and one Spirit, and had all Things common*.\* And indeed under the real Influence, and full Belief of this great Mystery of Divine Love, there seems to be no room left for any thing else amongst Christians, but Returns of Love to God, and Flowings out of Love towards one another.

But now it is so difficult to enter into Controversy without being, or at least *seeming* in some Degree unkind to the Person that one opposes, that it is with great Reluctance that I have entered upon my present Undertaking; having nothing more deeply riveted in my Heart, than an universal Love and Kindness for all Mankind, and more especially for those whom God has called to be my Fellow-Labourers in promoting the Salvation of Mankind. But however unwilling, yet I find myself obliged to consider, and lay open many grievous Faults in the Doctor's Discourse; and to shew to all Christians, that the dearest Interest of their Souls are much endangered by it.

And this I must do with great Plainness and Sincerity, in the Love of Truth, and under the Direction of Charity, saying nothing in the Spirit of an *Adversary*, sparing nothing through *Respect of Persons*, sacrificing nothing to the *Taste* or *Temper* of the World; but setting forth every thing in that naked Light, in which the Spirit of God represents it to my own Mind.

The Doctor undertakes to stir up, and alarm Mankind with the *Sin, Folly, and Danger of being righteous over-much*. The Text from which he has the *Title* of his Discourse is very unhappily chosen, and must be looked upon rather as a *severe Reproach*, than any kind of Justification of it. The Text is indeed in the Writings of *Solomon*, and, as it stands there, has no Hurt in it; because as the Royal Preacher sometimes introduces *Fools*, and sometimes *Infidels* making their Speeches, so there is a Necessity of supposing that to be the Case in the Doctor's Text; not only from the Con-

text,

\* Acts iii.

text, which plainly shews there are two Persons introduced, the one *for*, the other *against* Righteousness; but because the Words, unless stripped of all their proper Meaning, cannot be taken in a Sense that is tolerable, or consistent with the common *Notions* of Piety.

Is it not therefore strange that the Doctor should chuse to have a *Discourse* and *Title* to it, conformable to a Text of *this kind*? For if his *Discourse* is of a Piece with his Text, must not all sensible People find it as hard to reconcile his *Discourse*, as to reconcile the Text with the *common Notions* of Piety? Is it not strange, that he should think it right and just, to limit, explain, and model both the Letter and Spirit of the Gospel by such a Saying in the Writings of *Solomon*, as must be ascribed to the Spirit and Mouth of an Infidel? Is it not still stranger, that such a Text, so offensive to Piety, should have not only been so long dwelt upon in the Doctor's three Churches, but sent abroad into the Christian World, as a proper *Key* to all the practical Sayings, Parables, and Doctrines of Jesus Christ?

Supported by this Text, the Doctor endeavours to deter and fright Christians from the *Sin*, *Folly*, and *Danger* of being righteous over-much, and from what he calls the *baneful Plague* of Enthusiasm. But then it is Matter of just Complaint, that he does all this without ever shewing, in any Part of his *Discourse*, wherein true Righteousness, or the right and sober Spirit of Piety consists. If he supposed his Readers to be already well acquainted with the Nature and Extent of Christian Holiness, and to have just and distinct Ideas of Religion, what it is in itself, what Change and Perfection it aims at in human Nature, how, and by what Means a Man may make himself a full Partaker of all that Benefit, Change, and Perfection, that is intended by it, there would then have been little Occasion for his present Undertaking.

For if they may be supposed thus to know what is right in Religion, they would by such Knowledge be

in the best State of Security against that which is wrong.

But the Doctor overlooks this important Matter. He neither supposes them to have this Knowledge, nor endeavours to help them to it; but in a Flow of Zeal, in a loose, declamatory Style, reflects at large upon all Attempts towards a Piety that is not *modern, common*, and according to the present Power and Fashion of Religion in the World. Thus, you every where find hard and severe Reflections cast upon *Pretenders to Piety, pretended Spiritualists, and Righteous over-much*; great Accusation of *Excesses, Extraordinaries, and By-paths*; but no where a *Word, or a Hint*, in favour of those, who would only be so *excessive, so extraordinary*, and so much out of the *common Paths*, as the blessed Saints, and Martyrs of the Primitive Church were; no where are *such People* told, that he wishes them *God speed*, that *their Zeal* is much wanted both amongst *Clergy and Laity*; and that the Gospel suffers, because we know not where to find *living Examples* of its Purity and Perfection. No where are *such People* told, that he writes not *against* them, that he *loves* their Spirit, and should be glad to *add* new Fervours to it; no where are they told, what *Christian Perfection* is, what a holiness of Body, Soul, and Spirit it requires, and what blessedness of Life it gives; how powerfully all are called to it, how earnestly all ought to aspire after it, and how sadly they are mistaken, what Enemies to themselves, who for the sake of any, or all the Things in the World, die less perfect than they might have been.

If we had to do only with *one single* Person, sincerely good, yet seeming to carry Matters too high in some Parts of his Duty, if we intended *privately* to dissuade him from such Heights; yet even *this*, thus *privately* done, and to a Person of *Piety*, would be exceeding *dangerous*, and very *unjustifiable*; unless we took the utmost Care at the same time, to *keep up* the pious Zeal of his Mind, to shew him wherein the *true Point* of Perfection consisted, and to encourage his utmost Endeavours after it.

But



But if this Caution, Instruction, and Encouragement, cannot be omitted without great Hurt to Religion, when we speak only to a Person of *Piety*, and in *private*, about any religious *Extreams*, what must be said of the Doctor's Conduct, who to the World *dead in Trespasses and Sin*, preaches up the *Sin, Folly, and Danger* of being righteous over-much. To the World *eating and drinking and rising up to play*, he harangues upon the Madness, Danger, and Folly of too much Temperance, Abstinence, Mortification, and Severity of Life. To the World *asleep, insensible, and careless*, not only of the Purity and Perfection, but of the first Principles of the Gospel, he *boldly, rashly* reproaches all Appearances of Holiness that are *uncommon and extraordinary*. To *no Part* of the World does he represent, or propose the *Perfection* of the Gospel, or recommend it as that which deserves all that they can do, or suffer for Sake of it.

This, therefore, I am obliged to point out, as a *fundamental Defect* in the Doctor's Discourse, and such as renders it an evil *Temptation*, a dangerous *Snare*, and fatal *Delusion* to all those, who do not read it with a full and thorough Dislike.

Coldness, Indifference, and a lifeless, outward Compliance with the Duties of Religion; a Slavery to Ease, Softness, and sensible Pleasures; a criminal Conformity to the Spirit, Fashions, and Corruptions of the World; unmortified Passions; a conniving at favourite Sins; deep Roots of Pride, Partiality, and Self-love; an unawakened Conscience; an Insensibility of their corrupt, unreformed, unregenerate State; a Prone-ness to be content and satisfied with poor Beginnings, Names, and Appearances of Virtue; is perhaps the State of more than *Two-thirds* of those, that are looked upon to be the Religious amongst us.

Now the Doctor's Discourse has a direct and natural Fitness to lull all these People asleep, to suppress all Stirrings and Intentions of Amendment, to keep up and nourish every Disorder of their Hearts, to increase their Blindness, and awaken nothing in them but a *barren Zeal* to censure and condemn all those, that are



endeavouring to practise the *uncommon* Piety of the Gospel.

There is scarce a Reader amongst *this Number* of People, whether he be *Layman* or *Clergyman*, but will find this Effect from the Doctor's Instructions; he will begin to take *fresh Comfort* in his State, to think himself *happy* for having had no *Aspirings* after high Improvements in Piety; he will not only be *content* with his Corruptions, but be *fixed* and hardened against all *inward* and *outward* Calls to a solid Piety; he will approve of the *Deadness* and *Insensibility* of his own Heart, and acquiesce in it, as his true and just *Secur-ity* from the *Sin* and *Folly* and *Danger* of being righteous over-much.

Again: Others there are, I make no doubt, in all Parts of this Kingdom, both amongst Clergy and Laity, Men and Women, Rich and Poor, whose Consciences are greatly awakened, who see the *general Apostacy* from the Religion of the Gospel, whose Souls want and wish nothing so much as to know how, all that they *are*, all that they *have*, and all that they *do*, may be one continual Sacrifice, and Service of Love unto God; to know how, and in what Manner, and to what Extent, and by what Means, they may and ought to be *perfect*, even as their Father which is in Heaven is *perfect*.

Now who can help looking with *Love*, *Pity*, and *Compassion* upon these poor Souls, longing for that, which has been so long *lost*; asking after that, which scarce any one will tell them any thing of, and wanting to enter upon Paths where there are few or no Footsteps to be seen, nor any Travellers in Motion!

Had these awakened Souls lived in the first Ages of the Church, nay, I may say in almost any till these last Ages of it, their Zeal had not been in vain, they could have been at no Loss to know *how* they were to proceed in their heavenly Purpose; because they could have always been immediately directed to some *living Examples* of the perfect Spirit of the Gospel, who were publickly known and acknowledged by all to be such, and who had the same *undisputed Right* to point  
out

out every Degree of Christian Perfection, as *John the Baptist* had to preach up *Mortification* and *Self-denial*. Every *Age*, and every *Sex*, consecrated *Virgins*, holy *Widows*, *Converts*, and *Penitents*, *Priests* and *People* of *all Conditions*, had their open, known, and publick Standards to resort to, where every one was sure to be guided and directed, assisted and encouraged to live up to that Height of Holiness and Perfection which was proper to their State and Condition.

But now how does the Doctor deal with this sort of People? What *Love*, *Instruction*, *Assistance*, and *Encouragement* does he reach out to them? Why, truly, he considers them as a deluded, *weak*, or *hypocritical*, or *half-thinking* People, that disturb the Christian Church with their Projects about Perfection, who are to be set right by returning to the Instruction of *common Sense*. He ridicules and exposes every Step they must take in their intended Progress, by adding Absurdities of his own Invention to it. There is nothing for such People throughout his whole Discourse but Reproaches, Ridicule, and Discouragement.

Are they desirous of that *Self-denial*, that *Mortification* of bodily Appetites and sensual Passions, as may *best fit* them to be Temples of the Holy Spirit, he ridicules them as holding the Sinfulness of *smelling a Rose*? \*

Do they begin to discover the *deep Corruption* of their Nature, the *Superficialness* and *Weakness* of their Virtues, and to fear they have as yet scarce *come up* to the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees? He tells them, *The great Enemy of Souls adapts his Temptations to all sorts of Tempers and Dispositions.*—*Those who are disposed to be good and virtuous, if he cannot prevail with them to be vicious, commonly so called, he labours to make them over-virtuous, that is vicious, tho' not commonly so called; and so involves them in Dangers and Mischiefs.* †

Are they such as are only desirous of reforming their own Lives, by bringing all their Actions to the Standard

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dard of the Gospel, and wholly intent upon their own Advancement in merely *practical Piety*?

To these he shews, that they are in the *very Paths*, that lead, and always did lead to *Fanatick Madness*.

Thus says he, "To what a Height of *Fanatick Madness* in *Doctrine*, as well as Practice, are some advanced, who set out at first with an Appearance of more than ordinary Sanctity in *Practice only*?" And again, "I do say, that in all Ages Enthusiasts have been *righteous over-much*; they began with the last mentioned, and ended with the other. *And is it not so now?*" \*

Further; Are there others, who begin to feel the *Mystery* of their Redemption discovered in their own Souls, so that they hunger and thirst after the Manifestation of the divine Life in them, desiring that Christ may be wholly *formed and revealed* in them, that they may *put on* Christ, *be in him new Creatures*, led by his Spirit, *growing in him as Branches in the Vine*, hearing the Word of God *written and spoken* in their Hearts, in his Light *seeing Light*, and tasting in the inward Man the Powers of the World to come?

For such as these, the Doctor has this Instruction: "That there is, says he, such a Thing as the Operation and Influence of the Holy Spirit upon our Souls, tho' we cannot distinguish it from the Operations of our own Minds, is not only granted, but insisted upon by all sincere and sober Christians. But what *Reason*, what *Scripture* is there for this inward *Seeing, Hearing, Feeling?*" †

According therefore to the Doctor's Divinity, both Reason and Scripture *require*, that the true Christian be *inwardly blind*, *inwardly deaf*, and void of all inward *Feeling*. For if neither Scripture nor Reason will allow of any *inward Senses*, then they must both of them require an *inward Insensibility*. But Scripture, from *Genesis* to the *Revelations*, is full of Proof of these inward Senses. I shall not now produce them. I shall here only observe, that *Hardness of Heart* is a common

\* Page 39.

† Page 43.

common and well-known Phrase of Scripture, and every where signifies some Degree of *Blindness*, *Deafness*, and Loss of *Feeling*.\* I suppose it will not be said, that it signifies Blindness, or Loss of *outward Eyes and Ears*, or *Feeling*: Neither does it signify a Want of *human Reason*, or natural *Sagacity*; for *learned, polite, and ingenious Men* are full as subject as others are to this *Hardness of Heart*. Therefore the Scripture is as *open, as plain, and express* in declaring for *inward Senses*, as it is in declaring *against* such a Thing as *Hardness of Heart*.

Hardness of Heart is *that* to the *inward Senses*, which a *deep*, or, as we call it, a *dead Sleep*, is to the *outward*. It keeps our inward Eyes and Ears closed and stopped, just as Sleep does our outward Eyes, and Ears, and Feeling.

A *broken* and a *contrite Heart* unlocks all our inward Senses, and makes us see, and hear, and feel the Things, which could no more be seen, heard, or felt before, than a Man in a deep Sleep can hear, and see, and feel the Things that are said and done about him.

*Water* violently frozen into a *Rock of Ice*, is very different from the *same Water* melted, rarified, warmed, and moving under the Influences of the *Sun* and the *Air*.

Now if this *Water* was a *sensible Being*, we might well suppose, that when it was a *soft, yielding, transparent, flowing Substance*, full of *Light* and *Air*, that it had *certain Senses* in that State; which Senses were *lost, and locked up*, as soon as it became a hard, rough, thick, dark, immoveable *Rock of Ice*, made so by *Coldness*, or for the want of the Motion of *Light* and *Air* in it. And that the *Ice* must of all Necessity be *first melted*, before *these Senses* could be found again.

Now this Difference between *Water flowing* full of *Light* and *Air*, and the *same Water* frozen into a dark, hard *Rock of Ice*, is but a small Resemblance of the Difference between a *hardened Heart*, and the *same Heart* become broken.

And

\* Matth.



And a Lump of Ice would be as well qualified to deny that *sweet Sensibility* of Water flowing full of *Light* and *Air*, as the natural Man is to dispute those *Senses*, which arise in the Heart that is broken and penetrated by the *Spirit* of God in it.

I now return to the Doctor. His further Instruction to this sort of People stands thus. They are told by him, that their high Notions of spiritual Improvements have this Effect: On the one Hand, they lead to *Presumption*, on the other to *Desperation*. He has been told, he says, that some have been actually thrown into *Despair*. They have been made stark mad, and received into *Bedlam*, as such. And then he cries out, Was the Religion of *Jesus Christ* intended to make People mad? Is this for the Honour of Christianity? \*

I shall not here question the Doctor's Information. I shall only observe, that when our Saviour was upon Earth, there were two Sorts of mad People about him. The one Sort ran about in Disorder, tore their Cloaths, and cut their own Flesh; the other Sort raved in Malice, threw Dust into the Air, stopped their Ears, and cried out, *Crucify him, crucify him*.

Now it may be asked, which of these two Sorts of People were in the most *disordered* and *distempered* State? Whose *Madness* was the most shocking, that of the *Lunatics*, or that of the *High priests*, *Scribes*, and *Pharisees*? Those who only mangled their own Bodies, or those that *thirsted* after the Blood of Christ, and would have no Rest till they saw his Body nailed to the Cross? To me the *Lunatics* seem to be in a *less Degree* of Disorder; and the Reason is this, because I see that our Saviour could heal them, but not the Priests, Scribes, and Pharisees.

Now is it reasonable, on the account of the *Madness* of these Priests, Scribes, and Doctors of the Law, to say, Is this for the Honour of the Jewish Law? Was the Law and the Prophets intended to make People mad? Now if the Doctor knows how to excuse the Law and the Prophets, tho' these great Students of them were in such a desperate State of *Phrenzy* and *Madness*, then  
Christianity

Christianity may be blameless ; tho' here and there a Christian may be fit for *Bedlam*.

Again : Are there others, who desire to bring the whole Form of their Lives under Rules of Religion, to let the Spirit of the Gospel give Laws to the most indifferent, innocent, and lawful Things and Enjoyments, so that, as the Apostle speaks, *whether they eat or drink, or whatever they do, they may do all to the Glory of God?*

These People are told by the Doctor, that *wholly abstaining from Things indifferent and innocent in themselves, as forbidden and unlawful, is a signal Instance of being righteous over-much ; and so, on the other hand, is making Things indifferent to be necessary, and Matters of Duty* \*

What is here said has some Truth in it, and might be useful in its proper Place, and under right Limitations. But as it here stands in the Discourse, it is a grievous *Snare* and *Deceit* to the Reader. For it is to signify to him, that *wholly abstaining* from Things in themselves *indifferent* and *innocent*, cannot be made a *Matter* of true religious Advancement ; but is a blameable Instance of a Piety in Excess. If the Dr. had meant only to teach, that we should not wholly abstain from Things indifferent and innocent, as if they were *in themselves unlawful*, he should have told his Readers that he meant no more ; he should have told them, that such Things might be abstained from *justly*, and *piously* upon a better Principle, and so become very *expedient* and *edifying* ; and that he did not condemn the abstaining wholly from such Things, when it was done upon a *Motive* of Piety, for the *better* fulfilling any Duty ; but *only* when it was done from a superstitious Notion, of the Things being in *themselves sinful*.

Had he done this, he had prevented the *Snare* and *Deceit* that is now in his Assertion ; but then he would, at the same Time, have made it useless and insignificant to the Design of his Discourse, and would have

left

left a Door open for such Advances of Piety as he is here opposing.

It might easily be shewn, if this was the Place for it, that no one can *truly* fulfil, or live up to the two first and greatest of all Laws, that of loving God with all our Heart, all our Strength, and all our Mind, and that of loving our Neighbour as ourselves, unless he be willing and glad in many Instances, *wholly to abstain* from Things in themselves indifferent and innocent, and also to make Things that in themselves are indifferent, to be Matters of Duty.

St. Paul's Doctrine is this: *All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient.* This sets the Matter right on both Sides. It leaves Things in their own State of Indifference and Lawfulness, and yet carries us to a higher Rule of acting. It directs us wholly to abstain from some Things innocent in themselves, and to do some Things to which the Law calls us not, because they are *expedient*; because by so doing, we shew a higher Love of God, and a greater Desire of doing every thing to his Honour and Glory; because we thereby attain a greater Purity and Perfection of Heart, a greater Conquest over all our inward and outward Enemies, and in a greater Degree help forward the Edification of our Neighbour.

Let us look at St. Paul's Doctrine and Example in the two following remarkable Instances. *First*, where he declares it to be *lawful* for those that preach the Gospel to live by the Gospel, and yet makes it Matter of the greatest *Comfort* and *Joy* to himself, that he had wholly abstained from this *lawful* Thing. And declares, it were better for him to die, than that *this Rejoicing* should be taken from him. He appeals to his daily and nightly labouring with his own Hands, that so he might preach the Gospel freely, and not be chargeable to those that heard him. And this he said he did, not for want of Authority to do otherwise, but that he might make himself an Example unto them to follow him.

What fine and awakening Instructions are here given to us of the *Clergy* in a practical Matter of the greatest

greatest Moment! How ought every one to be frightened at the *Thought* of desiring or seeking a *second Living*, or of rejoicing at *great Pay* where there is but *little Duty*, when the Apostle's Rejoicing consisted in this, that he had passed thro' all the Fatigues and Perils of preaching the Gospel without any Pay at all! How *cautious*, nay, how *fearful* ought we to be, of going so far as the *secular Laws* permit us, when the Apostle thought it more desirable to lose his Life, than to go so far as the very Laws of the Gospel would have suffered him!

It is lawful to receive *more* for doing the Work of the Ministry in any *Parish*, and to spend more upon ourselves than our bare Subsistence requires——It is *looked upon as lawful* to get several *Preferments*, and to make a Gain of the Gospel, by hiring others to do Duty for us at a lower Rate——It is *looked upon as lawful* to quit a Cure of Souls of a small Income, for *no other Reason* but because we can get another of a greater——It is looked upon as lawful for a Clergyman to take the Revenue of the Church, which he serves, to his *own Use*, though he has more than a sufficient Competency of *his own*, and much more than the Apostle could get by his Labour.——It is looked upon as lawful for the Clergy to live in State and Equipage, to buy Purple and fine Linen, out of the Revenues of the Church——It is looked upon as lawful for Clergymen to enrich their Families, and bring up their Children in the fashionable Vanities, and corrupting Methods of a worldly and expensive Life, by Money got by preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

But now *supposing* all this to be *lawful*, what *Comfort* and *Joy* might we treasure up for ourselves, what *Glory* and *Honour* might we bring to Religion, what *Force* and *Power* might we give to the Gospel, what *Benefit* and *Edification* should we do to our Neighbour, if we *wholly abstained* from all these Things, not by working Day and Night with our own Hands, as the great Apostle did, but by limiting our Wants  
and



and Desires according to the plain Demands of Nature, and a religious Self-denial?

The other Instance of the Apostle's, I appeal to, is that where he says, it is good neither to eat *Flesh*, nor to drink *Wine*, nor any thing whereby thy Brother stumbleth and is offended. \* And again, If Meat make my Brother to offend, I will eat no *Flesh* while the *World* standeth, that I may not offend my Brother. † Hence it appears, that to abstain from Things indifferent, as if they were in themselves sinful, is wrong; but wholly to abstain from them upon other Motives, may be the highest Piety, and oftentimes Matter of necessary Duty and Edification. But since the Doctor has not looked at this Matter in this twofold View, in which it can only be justly apprehended, he can't well be excused from that *Half-thinking*, which he so much reproaches in others.

But I must farther observe, that there is yet more of *Snare* and *Deception*, in what the Doctor has here said of this Matter. For the Reader may thereby be easily brought into a Belief, that Things in themselves indifferent and innocent, &c. are not the proper Subjects of Religion, or Means of advancing in Piety, and that he need not bring himself under any Laws of Religion concerning such Things. Whereas nothing can be more contrary to Truth, or more hurtful to his Piety than such a Belief.

*Eating, Drinking, Sleeping, Dressing, Resting, Labour, Conversation, Trade, Diversion, and Money*, are in themselves indifferent, innocent, and useful. But it is in the religious, or irreligious Use of these Things that some People live up to the Spirit of the Gospel, and others wholly dye to it. And it is from strict Laws of Religion, made concerning these indifferent and innocent Things, that the spiritual Life of every one is to be built up.

And it is for want of religious Laws in the Use of innocent and lawful Things, that the Spirit of the Gospel cannot get Possession of our Hearts. For our Souls may receive an infinite Hurt, and be rendered incapable

\* Rom. xiv. 23.

† 1 Cor. viii. 13.

Incapable of all true Virtue, merely by the Use of innocent and lawful Things.

What is more innocent than *Rest* and *Retirement*? And yet what more dangerous than Sloth and Idleness? How lawful and Praise-worthy is the Care of a Family? And yet how certainly are many People rendered incapable of all Virtue, and dead to all the Calls of God, by a worldly, solicitous Temper? How lawful and beneficial is it to us, to eat and drink in such Quantity and Quality, as may render the Body healthful, subservient, and useful to the Soul? And yet, what Danger is there in eating and drinking, if we are not under *this strict Law* of Religion, to seek *only* Health, and not the Pleasure of various Tastes in our Food? What *Sensuality* of Discourse shall we not *every Day* fall into, unless it be a fixed Law to us, to speak of no other Joy in our Food, but that which is expressed by our *Grace* before and after our Meals.

How indifferent a Thing, and innocent in itself, is *Dress*? And yet what more hurtful and abounding with Sin? It reaches and infects the Heart and Soul, both of the Wearer and Beholder. Its Evils are innumerable. It has destroyed, and does destroy like a Pestilence.

If the lustful Eye is in the Scripture deemed to be an Adultery, we may see plainly the Reason why the Apostle requires Women to be *covered*, not to beautify their outward Person with costly Ornaments of Dress, or curled Hair, but to be adorned with *Shamefacedness* and *Modesty*. For it is only saying in other Words, that it becomes not the Piety of Christian Women to carry and hold out *Snares* and *Temptations* to the unwary Eye, that can so easily be betrayed into so great a Sin.

Now how can all these Evils, which arise from the Use of these Things indifferent and lawful in themselves, be avoided, but by making every Thing in our *common* and *ordinary* Life to be Matter of Conscience, which is, to have its *Rule*, and *Measure*, and *End* from the Spirit of Religion. And indeed what other End or Intent is there in Religion, but to govern every

ry Motion and Desire of our Hearts, to make all the Actions of our *common Life* pure and holy, by being done in strict Conformity to the Will of God, and under the Light and Guidance of his Holy Spirit? So that every outward *Form* of our Lives, and the *whole Manner* of our living in the World, whether in *Estates, Titles, Shops, or Farms*, whether in *Eating, Drinking, Dressing, &c.* may make it known to all the World, that we do every Thing in the *Name* of Jesus Christ, suitably to that high Vocation wherewith we are called.

The Apostle directs *Servants* to this Degree of Piety, that is, *to be obedient to their Masters in singleness of Heart, as unto Christ. Not with Eye-service, as Men-pleasers, but as the Servants of Christ, doing the Will of God from the Heart. With good will doing Service, as unto the Lord, and not to Men.\** Surely if poor Slaves, by Reason of their Christian Profession, are not to comply with their Business as *Men pleasers*, if they are to look wholly unto God in *all their Actions*, and serve in *singleness of Heart*, as unto the Lord, surely all Christians, of other *Employments and Conditions*, must be as much obliged to go through their Business with the *same singleness of Heart*, not as pleasing the Vanity of their own Minds, not as gratifying their own selfish, worldly Passions, but as the Servants of God, that are to live *wholly* unto him in *every thing* that they do. It is therefore absolutely certain, that no Christian is to enter *any further* into Business, nor seek any worldly Profit, nor do any Thing in any other *measure*, nor for any *other End*, than such as he can in *singleness of Heart* do unto God, as a reasonable Service.

No Folly of Life whatever can be rightly removed, but by being thus *wholly* cut up by the Roots, by making *every thing* subject to the Spirit of Religion.

That which is to direct our *Prayers*, and govern us at *Church*, must with the *same Strictness* direct our *Conversation*, and govern our Dealings in common Life. We must *dress* with the same Spirit that we give *Alms*, or go to *Prayers*; that is, we must no more dress  
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\* Eph. vi. 5. Col. iii. 22.

to be *seen* and *admired* by others, than we must give *Alms*, or make *Prayers* for the same Reasons.

And when Religion has its Seat in our Hearts, and is the Work of God's Spirit in us, this acting according to its Direction in *all Things*, will be so far from seeming to be a hard Lesson, that it would be a Pain to act otherwise. It is no Hardship to a *Miser*, to do *every Thing* suitable to the greedy Desires of his Heart. The ambitious Man is not troubled with acting always agreeably to his Ambition. If these Persons are in Trouble or Distress, or under any Dejection, you can only comfort the one with Honour and Power, and the other with filthy Lucre and Gain.

Yet the Doctor complains of the *Treatise upon Christian Perfection*, because Christians in *Sickness*, *Distress*, and *Dejection* of Spirit are there *solely* directed to seek for Comfort and Refreshment in God *alone*. Our Blessed Lord is very short, and yet very full upon this Article; he only says, *Be of good Comfort, I have overcome the World*. And the Doctor might as well be angry at the *Gospel* for having made no mention of *worldly Amusements*, proper for *sick* and *distressed* Christians, as at the *Treatise of Christian Perfection*, for not having done the same.

If I should see a *sick Man* smelling a *Rose*, eating an *agreeable Fruit*, or *diverting* himself with a Child, I should not call him from such sinful Indulgences. But if he wanted Comfort in his State, I would no more direct him to *any thing* but the great and solid Comforts that are to be found in the Love and Goodness of God, than I would direct him to *another Saviour* than Jesus Christ.

For to tell Christians, that in *some kinds* of Trouble they might justly seek for Relief by reading a *Play*, or wanton *Bucolick*, instead of the *Gospel*; would be the same Absurdity, as to have told People in our Saviour's Time, that in *some sorts* of Distress they might justly have Recourse to *Simon Magus*, instead of Jesus Christ.

But now to look back a little. I have considered the Bulk of those Christians that are the most likely to be.



be the Doctor's Readers, under two Characters. The one as living some way or other in a partial, false, superficial, or half State of Piety; the other, as an awakened People, called by the Spirit of God to come out of the common Corruptions of the Times. I have shewn, that the Doctor's Discourse (where it is not disliked) must do great Hurt, and have dreadful Effects upon those two Sorts of People; the one Sort it seals up in a false Security, sleeping in the Chambers of Death, without any Oil in their Vessels; the other it frightens, and discourages from their pious Intentions of trimming their Lamps with all Diligence, and living upon the *watch* for the midnight Call of the Bridegroom's Voice.

That I may therefore do all the Good that I can to both these Sorts of People; that I may awaken the one from their false Security in their half Form of Godliness, and assist and encourage the other to proceed with all Earnestness, after every Degree of Christian Holiness, I shall proceed.

What we want from Jesus Christ, as our Redeemer, is manifest by that which he offers and gives to us, ~~namely~~, a Birth from *himself*, a Birth from the *Holy Spirit*, a Redemption from the *Hell* that is in our Souls, and from the *Death* and *Corruption* that is in our Bodies.

We were no more created to be in the Sorrows, Burdens, and Anguish of an *earthly Life*, than the Angels were created to be in the *Wrath* and *Darkness* of Hell. It is as contrary to the *Will* and *Goodness* of God towards us, that we are *out* of Paradise, as it is contrary to the Designs and Goodness of God towards the Angels, that some of them are *out* of Heaven, Prisoners of Darkness.

The Grossness, Impurity, Sickness, Pain, and Corruption of our Bodies, is brought upon us by ourselves, in the same manner as the dark, hideous, serpentine Forms of the Devils are brought upon them. How absurd, and even blasphemous would it be, to say with the Scripture and the Church, that we are by *Nature Children of Wrath*, and *born in Sin*, if we had that  
Nature

Nature which God at first gave us? What a Reproach upon God to say, that this World is a *Valley of Misery, a Shadow of Death*, an Habitation of *Disorders, Snares, Evils, and Temptations*, if this was an *original* Creation, or that State of Things for which God created us? Is it not as consistent with the Goodness and Perfections of God, to speak of the *Misery and Disorder* that holy Angels find *above*, and of the *Vanity, Emptiness, and Sorrow* of the *heavenly State*, as to speak of the *Misery of Men*, and the *Sorrows of this World*, if Men and the World were in *that Order* in which God at first had placed them? If God could make *any Place poor, and vain, and miserable*, or create *any Beings into a State of Vanity and Vexation of Spirit*, he might do so in *all Places*, and to *all Beings*.

But by the Mercy of God in Christ Jesus, this Prison of an earthly Life is turned into a State of *Purification*; it is made a *Time and Place* of putting off our *filthy and defiled Garments*, and of *slaying and sacrificing* that corrupt old Man of Sin that is hid under them. And God suffers the *Sun* to shine upon us, and the *Elements* to afford us Nourishment, for *no other End*, but that we may all have *Time and Opportunity* to hear the *Call* of the Son of God, to embrace a second *Adam*, to be *born again* of him, to be renewed by the *Holy Spirit*, and be made capable of that Kingdom from which *Lucifer* and his Angels fell.

Look at our Saviour's Sermon on the *Mount*, and indeed at all his Instructions, and you will find them pointing at nothing else on *our Side*, but a *Denial* of ourselves, and a *Renunciation* of the World. And indeed how could it be otherwise? For if we are ourselves *something* which we were not created to be, and if this is our *Misery*, that we have raised and awakened a *Nature and Life* in us, which is not our *first*, that we had from God; must not the first Step towards our Salvation be, a denying and departing with *our whole Will and Inclination* from that which we have made ourselves to be, from that *Life* which we have awakened in us? If *Self* is our *Misery and Captivity*, must

must not our Deliverance require a total, continual Self-denial? If we want a Redeemer, *only* because we have *wandered* out of Paradise, and could not get *back* to it ourselves; if we are overcome by this World, only because the *Will* and *Desire* of our first Father *sought* after it, what Wonder is it that he who is to *re-place* us in Paradise should call us to a *Renunciation* of the World? If this World has got its Dominion over us, *merely* because the *Will* and *Desire* of Man turned itself towards the Earth, how can its Dominion over us be *destroyed*, but by our *turning* our whole *Will* and *Desire* towards Heaven?

Vain Man, taken with the *Sound* of heavenly Things, and *Prospects* of future Glory, yet at the same time a *fast Friend* to all the Interests and Passions of Flesh and Blood, would fain compound Matters between God and Mammon. He is very willing to acknowledge a *Saviour*, that died on the Cross to save him; he is ready to receive outward *Ordinances*, and *Forms* of divine Worship, and to contend with Zeal for the Observance of them. He likes Heaven and future Glory on these Conditions. He is also ready to put on an *outward Morality* of Behaviour, to let Religion polish his Manners, that he may have the Credit and Ornament of a *prudential Piety*, *well ordered Passions*, and a *Decency* of outward Life; this gives no Hurt, or at least no *Death's-Blow* to the old Man. But to lay the Axe to the *whole Root* of our Disease, to cut all those *filken Cords* asunder, which tie us to the World, and the World to us; to deny every Temper and Passion that cannot be made holy, wise, and heavenly; to die to every Gratification which keeps up and strengthens the Folly, Vanity, Pride, and Blindness of our *fallen Nature*; to leave no *little Morsels* of Sensuality, Avarice, and Ambition for the *old Man* to feed upon, however well *covered* under his Mantle; this, though it be the very Essence of Religion on *our Part*, is what he flies from with as much Aversion as from *Heresy* and *Schism*. Here he makes learned Appeals to *Reason* and *common Sense*, to judge betwixt him and the Gospel; which is just as wise, as to ask the learned  
Greek,

*Greek*, and the worldly *Jew*, whether the *Cross* of Christ be not *Foolishness*, and a just Rock of Offence; or to appeal to *Flesh* and *Blood* about the narrow Way to that *Kingdom of Heaven*, into which itself cannot possibly have any Entrance.

To seek for any Thing in Religion but a *new Nature*, fitted for a new World, is knowing neither it, nor ourselves. *To be born again*, is to be fit for Paradise, in whatever Part of the Universe we live. *Not to be born again*, is continuing *where* the Sin and Death of *Adam* left us, whatever *Church* or *Sect* of Religion we have Fellowship with. All *Ways* and *Opinions*, all *Forms* and *Modes* of Divine Worship stand on the *Outside* of Religion. They may be, and certainly are, great and desirable *Helps* to the Kingdom of God, when we consider them only as the *Gate*, or *Guide* to that *inward Life*, which wants to be raised and brought forth in us. But this is unquestionably true, that our *Salvation* consists *wholly* and *solely* in the *Birth* from the Son of God, and the *Renewal* of the Holy Ghost in our Souls. When *this* begins, our *Salvation begins*, as this goes on, our *Salvation goes on*, when this is finished, our *Salvation is finished*. This alone *saves* the Soul, because this alone restores the first paradisaical, divine Nature, which is the true Image of God, and which alone can enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

If we had only a *notional Knowledge* that our first Father had *sinned*, and knew no more of his *sinful Condition* than History tells us of it; if we had only certain *instituted Types* and *Figures* to keep up the Remembrance of it in our Minds, we should be never the worse for his Sins; we should have no Hurt by *owning* ourselves to be Children of a sinful Father, if his *Nature*, *Life*, and *Spirit* was not propagated in us: So, if we have only a *notional Belief* that Jesus is become the *second Adam*, to redeem, or *regenerate* the fallen Nature, if we know this only in the *Notion* and *History* kept up in our Minds by *outward Figures* and *Ordinances*, though we contend ever so much for this Belief of a Saviour, and write *Volumes* in Defence of it, yet he is not *our Saviour* till his *Nature*, *Life*, and *Spirit*



*Spirit* be born in us. If there be any Man in the World, in whom the *Nature* of *Adam* is not, he has *no Sin* from *Adam*. If there be any Man in whom the *Life* of *Jesus* is not, he has *no Righteousness* from him. We must have *Life* and *Righteousness* in the same *Truth and Reality* in us from the second *Adam*, as we have *Sin* and *Death* in us from the first.

The whole of the Matter is this: This World is our *Curse* and *Separation* from God; by the *Mystery* of our *Redemption* it is turned into a short State of *Purification*, and can only be made so, by our going with our *whole Will* and *Desire* out of it, and away from it, as *Adam* by his *Will* and *Desire* fought after, and fell into it. The second *Adam* must take us out, as the first *Adam* brought us into this World. Our Bodies are our Burdens which *Sin* has laid upon us: Our *stinging, wounding Passions* are the *Nails* which must fasten our Hands and Feet to the *Cross* on which we are to die, and commend our *Spirit* into the Hands of God as our Lord did. But yet, all this Turning with our *whole Will* and *Desire* towards God and Paradise, all this *bearing* our *Cross*, and passing through the *fiery Trials* of this Life, is still but *preparatory* to our *Salvation*, which wholly consists in the *Incarnation* of the Son of God in the Soul, or Life of Man. As our *Sin* and *Death* is *Adam in us*, so our *Life* and *Salvation* is *Christ in us*. This is it alone that *saves* us, that *delivers* us from the Fall, that *restores* all that was lost in *Adam*; by this alone what died in *Adam*, is brought to *Life* again in us; by this alone we can be taken out of an earthly *Life, Nature, and World*, and translated into an heavenly *Life, Nature, and World*.

*Christ*, by the over-shadowing of the Holy Spirit, became in the Body of the holy Virgin *Mary*, of the same *Nature* with that *first Man* which was created in Paradise, who, according to the *Purpose* of God, was to have been the *Father* of an holy, paradisaical *Race* of Men. Now the *first Purpose* of God must *stand*, and that which God designed must *come to pass*. But seeing the first *Adam* failed in this *Design* of God, and was not the *Generator* of such a *Race* of Men, therefore

fore the Wisdom of God provided a *second Adam*, who was born of the *Virgin Mary*, in the *same Degree* of Perfection in which the first Man was created. To this holy, paradifical, human Nature, the *Son of God* was *personally* united; and thus Christ, the second *Adam*, took the *Place* of the first, and stands as the Regenerator, Redeemer, second Father of all the Sons of *Adam*. Now as we are *earthly, corrupt, and worldly Men*, by having the *Nature and Life* of the first *Adam* propagated in us, so we must become *holy, paradifical and heavenly Men*, by having the *Life and Nature* of the second *Adam* deriv'd into, or regenerated in us; or, as the Scripture speaks, by being *born again* of him. Therefore if we are to have the *Nature* of Christ regenerated in us, as the *Life of Adam* is *born* in us; if we are to be *like him* in Nature as we are like to *Adam* in Nature; if we are to be the heavenly Sons of the one, as we are the earthly Sons of the other, then there is an *absolute Necessity*, that Christ must become our Regenerator, that we should be born of the Spirit and Water or become new Creatures. The *Mystery* of Christ's Birth must be the *Mystery* of *our Birth*; we cannot be his Sons, but by having a *Birth from him* derived into us; for the *new* paradifical Man must be brought forth in the *same manner* in every individual Person; *that* which brought forth this holy Birth in the *first Adam* at his Creation, and in the *second Adam* in the *Virgin Mary*, *that alone* can bring it forth in any one of their Off-spring. Jesus Christ therefore stands as our *Regenerator*, to help us by a *second Birth* from him, to such an *holy, pure, and undefiled* Nature, as he himself receiv'd in the *blessed Virgin*, and which we should have received in Paradise from our *first Father*.

From the Time of the Fall of *Adam*, the *incorruptible Seed* of Christ is in us all, in the whole human Nature; he has Power, as the Son of God, to quicken and raise it up, till it comes to be that first holy image of the blessed Trinity. And when a divine Faith arises in this *Seed of Life*, by Baptism, which is the Laver of Regeneration, it lays hold on Christ as the Author, Preserver, and Finisher of its Life, as

the Atonement, Saviour and Deliverer from the Death and Hell that surrounds it, then it grows up into a *new, inward* Man, of the same Nature with *that* which *appear'd* in Paradise. Then a Birth from the Son of God, that *first holy Humanity* which *Adam* lost, are all restored to us, but in a *Mystery* in the inward Man *hid* in God, till the Resurrection shall separate every thing that is *earthly, dark, and corruptible* from it. Thus by Faith in Christ we *put on Christ*, he becomes *formed in us*, we eat *his Flesh*, and drink *his Blood*, and have *his Nature and Life in us*; that is, we have a *Flesh and Blood*, a holy Humanity, deriv'd into us from Christ, in the *same Reality* as we have *Flesh and Blood*, a corrupt Humanity from *Adam*, our first Father. Thus we are real Members, living Branches, and new-born Children of Christ, our Regenerator; he is our Father, and as such, as certainly brings us into the Kingdom of Heaven, Heirs of all his Glory, as *Adam* brought us into the Prison of this World, Heirs of all his Sin and Misery. This is the whole of the Christian Redemption. Let us look where we will, and talk of what we will, there is no Possibility of Salvation for any one Son of *Adam*, but in *this divine Birth*, nor can this Birth be had any other way. And to this great Truth all the Writings of the New Testament, bear undeniable witness. For the further and full View of this important Matter, I refer the Reader to another *little Book* \*, which, if I could afford it, should be sent *gratis* into all Parts of the Kingdom. Look now at your *selves*, at the *World*, at *Religion*, in this true Light, and surely you must enough see and feel the desirable Nature of every Virtue, and every Degree of it, which the Gospel sets before you. Surely you must awaken into a strong Abhorrence of every thing, that the *Fall* has brought upon you, whether it be in your *Souls*, your *Bodies*, or the *State* of the World into which you are fallen. To renounce the poor Interests of a worldly Life, to be content with a *Pilgrim's Fare* in it, to live looking and longing after that which  
you

\* Grounds and Reasons of Christian Regeneration, &c.

you have lost; to have no more of Covetousness, of Pride, of Vanity and Ambition, than *John* the Baptist had; to live unto God in your *Shops*, your *Employments*, and *Estates*, with such Thoughts and Desires of going to your heavenly Father, as the *lost Son* had when he saw his poor Condition, eating *Husks* among *Swine*, is only a Proof that you are, like him, *come to yourselves*, that you begin to see *what*, and *how*, and *where* you are. Surely you can need no Exhortations to hasten and run to your Redeemer, to ask and beseech him in Faith and Love to do every Thing in you and for you, that your darken'd, corrupted Heart, and polluted Body stands in need of. He now stands as near you, as full of Love over you, as he did to *Lazarus* when he raised him from the Dead. He is no farther from your Call, than he was from the Call of blind *Bartimeus*, whose Eyes he immediately opened. Surely it should now be more needless to exhort you to look earnestly and diligently after every Means of recovering your first glorious State, than to exhort the Blind to receive their Sight, the Sick to accept of Health, or the Captive to suffer his Chains to be taken off. For when you thus see your *Misery* and your *Redemption* in this strong Light, both of them so exceeding great, you see *something* that must needs penetrate and awaken the inmost Depth of your Soul, that leaves you no Room to *doubt* about the Nature of any Virtue, no Liberty to indulge *one vain* Passion, or to think it any Hardship that the Gospel calls you to be *perfect*. For in *this Light* every Virtue of the Gospel stands known and recommended to us, just as *Health*, *Purity* and *Sight*, stand recommended to a *sickly*, *noisome*, *blind Leper*, who was shut up in a *Place* that continually increased all his Evils. It strips us of nothing but the *Uncleanness* of Leprosies, the *Miseries* of Sores, Pains, and Blindness. It takes nothing from the World which is about us, but its Poison and Power of infecting us. So that to be call'd to the Height of all Virtue attainable in this Life, however excessive it may seem to the *Reasonings* of Flesh and Blood, is only being call'd *away* from every *Misery* and *Evil* that can be avoided by us. Jesus Christ is become our Regenerator, that we may again be made like unto



God, have the *Purity* and *Perfection* of an angelick Nature, and be made capable of enjoying the infinite Riches and Treasures of the divine Nature to all Eternity. No Virtue therefore has any *blameable Extreme* in it, till it *contradicts* this general End of Religion, till it *hinders the* Restoration of the divine Image in us, or makes us *less fit* to appear amongst the Inhabitants of Heaven. *Abstinence, Temperance, Mortification* of the Senses and Passions, can have *no Excess* till they hinder the *Purification* of the Soul, and make the Body less useful and subservient to it. *Charity* can have *no Excess*, till it *contradicts* that Love which we are to have in Heaven, till it is *more* than that which would *lay down* its Life even for an *Enemy*, till it *exceeds* that which the first Christians practised, when they had *all things common*; till it exceeds that of St. *John*, who requires him that has *two Coats*, to give to him that has none, and he that *has Meat* to do likewise; till it is loving our poor Brethren *more* than Christ has loved us; till it goes *beyond* the Command of loving our Neighbour as we love ourselves; till it forgets that our own Life is to be preserv'd.

See now how the Doctor instructs and enlightens his Readers on these two great Articles, *Christian Temperance*, and *Charity*. To remove the Restraints of the first, he says, "Our Blessed Saviour came eating and drinking, was present at Weddings, and other Entertainments; nay, at one of them worked a Miracle to make Wine, when it is plain, there had been more drank than was absolutely necessary for the support of Nature, and consequently something had been indulg'd to Pleasure and Cheerfulness\*."

O Holy Jesus, that thy Divine Life, should by a Preacher of thy Gospel, be made a *Plea* for Liberties of Indulgence! The Doctor's Argument lies in this, that our Saviour work'd a *Miracle to help them to more Wine*, when they had already *drank to the Indulgence of Pleasure and Cheerfulness*, therefore he could be *no Enemy* to such pleasant Indulgences, therefore it is *lawful* for us Christians to delight in them. Now if  
this

this Lawfulness is well prov'd, the Doctor may go on and prove these Indulgences to be *good and pious*, because what our Saviour work'd a *Miracle to promote*, must needs be esteem'd to be so. And so the *adding* another Bottle, when Friends are rejoicing, may be made to be a *Christian Duty*. But the Doctor should have remember'd, that the *Wine* here spoken of, was not *common Wine*, and therefore, has not the *least Relation* to our *common Drinking*—that it was not Wine from the *Juice* of the Grape—that it had nothing in it, but what came from a heavenly Hand—that it must have in it the *Purity* and *Virtue* of him that made it—that it had as good *Qualities* in it, and was fitted to have the *same Effects* upon *some* that drank it, as the *Clay*, which he moisten'd with *his Spittle*, had upon the *Eyes* of the *Blind*. He should have remember'd, that it was *Water* only *so alter'd* and endued with *such Qualities*, as he pleased to *put into* it, and therefore we may be sure, it was Water as *highly bless'd* for their Use, as they were *capable* of; we may be sure it was fitter to allay the Heat, and disorder of their Drinking, than if it had been *Water unalter'd* by our Saviour. How suitable was this Miracle to a Feast! How worthy of so Divine a Person! To make them *cooler*, by giving them Water made fitter for that Purpose, and to raise their *Faith* by its miraculously seeming to be turn'd into the best of Wine. Well might it be said of this Miracle, that he thereby *manifested forth his Glory*, and *his Disciples believed on him*. But according to the Doctor's horrid Account of this Miracle, it must be said, that he thereby shew'd his Approbation of *continuing* such Pleasures of Drinking, and has left us a Proof, that we may do the same: but I must further vindicate the Life and Example of our blessed Lord from the Indignity and Irreverence done to it by the Doctor. Our Lord came indeed, as he says of himself, *eating and drinking*. But how, or in what Manner, or in what Sense, did he say this of himself? Why, it was in Opposition to, and Distinction from *John the Baptist*, who came eating only *one Sort* of Food. And it was to shew the *Jews* their great Guilt in this respect, that

*nothing* could do them any good. For the *Mortification* of the Baptist they condemned, as coming from the Devil, and the *Condescension* of Jesus in coming to their Tables, they accus'd as *Gluttony* and *Wine-bibbing*. Now the Doctor is plainly doing what our Lord accus'd the *Jews* of; he with them condemns the *Mortification* of the Baptist, as coming from the Devil. But he differs from the *Jews* in this, that he does not condemn, but *approves* of our Lord, as a *Friend* to Feasts, and merry Meetings.

Our Saviour, suitable to his gracious Love, in coming into the World, sought the Conversation of Sinners and Publicans, because he came to *save that which was lost*, and because he knew that some amongst such Sinners were more moveable, than the proud Sanctity of the learned Pharisees. But may we thence conclude, that the *Lives* of such Sinners were not blameable in his Sight? Is not this as well, as to imagine he *favour'd* the Indulgences of Feasting, and good Fellowship, because he was found there? Jesus conversed *more freely*, spoke of himself, and of the Kingdom of God *more divinely* to a *Wicked Woman* of *Samaria*, than he appears to have done to his Disciples. May we thence conclude, that he  *approv'd* of a Woman of that Character, or that he thereby set his *Seal* to the Goodness and Lawfulness of her way of living? Is not this as well, as to make his *Presence* at a Wedding, an *Approbation* of the Freedom and Indulgences of such Feasts?

O Son of God, thou didst nothing of thyself, thou soughtest only the Glory of thy Father, from the Beginning to the end of thy Life; thou spentest whole Nights in Prayer in Mountains and Desert Places, thou hadst not where to lay thy Head, thy common poor Fare with thy Disciples was *barley Bread* and *dry'd Fish*, thy miraculous Power never help'd thee to any Dainties of Refreshment, tho' ever so much fatigu'd, and faint-ed with Labour. But yet because this Holy Jesus came into the World to save *all Sorts* of Sinners, and to shew that every Kind and Degree of Sin could be taken away, and forgiven by him, therefore he came in-  
to

to all Places, and enter'd into all Sorts of Companies. He did not, as the *Baptist*, tie himself to one sort of Food, but he came eating and drinking. But why did he so? It was, that he might reprove, and convert Sinners at their own Tables. He came, not to indulge himself, or to find such Gratifications as the *Baptist* abstain'd from, but to *work Miracles*, to awaken and astonish Sinners in the *Midst* of their Indulgences.

It is said, that where-ever the *King* is, there is the *Court*. But with much more Reason may it be said, that where-ever our Saviour came, there was the *Temple*, or the *Church*. He came to *Feasts* and *Entertainments* with the same Spirit, for the same End, and in the same Divine Power, as he went to raise a *dead Corpse*, namely to shew forth the Glory of God: Where-ever he came, it was in the *Spirit* and *Power* of the Redeemer of Mankind; every Thing he did, was only to destroy the Works of the Devil, to deliver Men from his Power, raise the *Dead*, and give *Sight* to the Blind, and *Ears* to the Deaf; it made no Difference to him, whether he did this in the *Temple*, or in the *Streets*, at a *Feast*, or at a *Funeral*. As he was every where God, so every Place became Holy to him. *Lastly*, if our Saviour came *Eating* and *Drinking*, and was present, as is pretended, at cheerful Entertainments, to shew his *Approbation* of such Indulgences, and to leave us a *Proof*, that we may do so too; how came *John the Baptist*, that severe Master of Mortification, to be a fit Preparer of the Way to the Kingdom of Heaven? Surely his *Voice* must cry *Wrong*, if such Mortification was not *right*. And if our Saviour disapprov'd of the *Severity* of his Life and Manners, how came he to point him out to the *Jews*, as a *burning* and *shining Light*? Thus much may serve to vindicate our Saviour's holy Life and Example from the shocking Misapplication the Doctor has made of it.

Let us now see how he treats and instructs the charitable Christian in these Words. "What! says the *Half-Thinker*, is not Charity to the Poor, a most excellent Thing? And can I be too charitable? Can I therefore bestow too much upon the Poor? I an-



“ fwer, would you confider the other Side, you  
 “ would perceive, that tho’ you cannot be too charitable,  
 “ yet you may beftow too much upon the Poor, to the  
 “ Ruin of your Wife and Children, which is not  
 “ Charity but *Madnefs*, and a great and *moft grievous*  
 “ *Sin*. Did you never hear, that *Charity begins at*  
 “ *home*? Did you never read that of *St. Paul*? If  
 “ *any provide not for his own*, and *efpecially thofe of his*  
 “ *own Houfe*, *he hath deny’d the Faith, and is worfe than*  
 “ *an Infidel*\*.”

The Doctor’s Proverb I fhall leave to himfelf. But the Text of *St. Paul*, which he has as grofly miftaken and mifapply’d, as he did our Saviour’s Miracle, I muft take out of his Hands. *St. Paul*’s Words are quoted to prove, that it is *Madnefs*, a great and grievous *Sin*, for any one through Charity to the Poor to render himfelf unable to provide for his *Wife* and *Children*. Now the Apoftle in this Place fpeaks no more about *this Sin*, than he fpeaks againft the Sin of *Watching* and *Prayer*. Nay, what is more, there is not in all his Writings, or in the whole New Testament, the *leaft Suppofition* or *Hint* that fuch a Sin ever was, or would be committed by any charitable Man. The Apoftle was fingly fpeaking of *fuch Women* as were to be taken into the Order of *Widows*, for the Service of the Church, and to be maintained by it.† Verfe 4. he fays, that fuch Widows as had *Children* or *Nephews* that could fupport them, fuch were not to be maintain’d by the Church. And to fuch *Sons* and *Nephews* who have *Mothers* and *Aunts* that thus want their Affiftance, he fays, *If any one provide not for his own*, *efpecially for thofe of his own Houfe*, i. e. If any *Sons* or *Nephews*, having *Mothers* or *Aunts* become *defolate Widows*, and take not care to affift them, efpecially if they live with them, fuch have renounc’d the Piety of the Gofpel, and have not fo much Humanity as *Infidels*. This alone is the plain Doctrine of the Apoftle, which the Doctor has grofly perverted, to the condemning of that which he never thought of, either there, or in any Part of Scripture, On the contrary, the Scripture abounds with Paflages that

that might persuade us, that no *Family*, could ever be ruin'd by the *Alms* and *Charity* of its Father. *I have been young, and now am old, said the Psalmist, yet never saw I the Righteous forsaken, or their Seed begging their Bread. The liberal Soul shall be made fat, and he that watereth, shall be watered again.* They that cannot believe this want the *Faith* of Christians. Had any one in the Apostle's Time reduced his Wife and Children to *Want*, by his *great Charity* to the Poor, the Apostle would have been so far from rebuking him, as a *half-thinking Fool*, or exposing him to others, as guilty of *Madness*, and *grievous Sin*, that he would have told them, that he had consecrated *himself* and *Family* to the Church, that he and they were thereby become the dear Objects of the Church's *Care* and *Love*, since their present Distress was brought upon them by a boundless Love and Compassion for the Poor. I will now suppose that the Apostle had condemn'd a *Charity* in a *Father* that was to the Detriment of his *Wife* and *Children*; I will put the following *Case* in as high Terms as the Dr. can well desire. Let it be supposed that some good *Bishop*, possessed of as rich a *Bishoprick* as that of *Winchester*, should through his extensive Love and Charity for the Poor throughout his whole Diocese, be forc'd to use the *utmost Frugality* in Family-Expence, and to bring up his Children in *Employments* of Labour, to help themselves to *Food* and *Raiment*; one a *Carpenter*, in which Business our Saviour is said to have labour'd in his Youth; another a *Maker of Tents*, the *Trade* of the great Apostle; and the rest in the like manner. Let it be suppos'd, that when he dy'd, he left barely enough to encourage their Industry. Let it be supposed that by his Life and Conversation, he had fill'd his Wife and Children with the *true* and *perfect* Spirit of the Gospel, that they lov'd and rejoic'd in his Memory for all the Good that he had done to them, desiring nothing but to go through the World in the same *Humility*, *Piety*, *Charity*, *Love* of God, and *Renunciation* of the World, as he had done. Will the Dr. say, that this *Bishop* had ruin'd his Wife and Children? that *half-thinking* had betray'd him into a *most*

*grievous Sin*, that he had by this Life *deny'd the Faith*, and become *worse* than an *Infidel*? I will venture to say, that if such a Bishop should ever appear in this Kingdom, he would bid fair to put an End to *Infidelity* through all his Diocese, tho' it were the largest in the Nation. Now if the Dr. does not *know* of any one, either amongst the *Laity* or *Clergy*, who is *ruining* his Wife and Children by a *greater* and *more blameable* Charity than that of this Bishop, it must be said, that he has been in too much haste, that his *Zeal* has not proceeded from *Knowledge*; and that he has been throwing *cold Water* upon Charity, before there was any *Flame* in it.

I now proceed to shew in a more general Way, the blameable Nature and Design of the Doctor's Discourse. The whole Christian World, from the Time of our Saviour to this Day, has been praying, *Thy Kingdom come, thy Will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven*. Sacraments, divine Worship, and the Order of the Clergy, are appointed as ministerial Helps for this End, to raise, set up, and establish this Kingdom of God on Earth. The *Fall* of Man brought *forth* the Kingdom of this World; Sin in all Shapes is nothing else but the *Will* of Man driving on in a State of *Self-Motion*, and *Self-Government*, following the Workings of a Nature *broken off* from its Dependancy upon, and Union with the Divine Will. All the Evil and Misery in the Creation arise *only* and *solely* from this one Cause. There is not the smallest Degree of Distraction, Pain or Punishment either within us, or without us, but what is owing to this, *viz.* that Man stands *out of* his Place, is not *in*, and *under*, and *united* to God as he should be as the Nature of Things require. God created every Thing to partake of his *own Nature*, to have some Degree and Share of his *own Life* and *Happiness*. Nothing can be good or evil, happy or unhappy, but as it does, or does not stand in the same Degree of *Divine Life* in which it was created, receiving in God, and from God, all that Good that it is capable of, and co-operating with, and under him, according to the Nature of its Powers and Perfections. As soon as it

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turns to itself, and would, as it were, have a Sound of it's own, it breaks off from the *Divine Harmony*, and falls into the Misery of its own *Discord*; and all its Workings then are only so many Sorts of Torment, or Ways of feeling its own Poverty. The Redemption of Mankind can then only be effected, the Harmony of the Creation can only then be restor'd, when the Will of God is the Will of every Creature. For this Reason our blessed Lord having taken upon him a created Nature, so continually declares against the doing any Thing of himself, and always appeals to the Will of God, as the only *Motive* and *End* of every Thing he did, saying, that it was his *Meat* and *Drink* to do the Will of him that had sent him.

What now can be so desirable to a sober, sensible Man, as to have the *vain, disorderly* Passions of his own corrupted Heart remov'd from him, to be fill'd with such *Unity, Love, and Concord*, as flows from God, to stand united to, and co-operating with the Divine Goodness, willing nothing, but what God wills, loving nothing, but what God loves, and doing all the Good that he can to every Creature, from a Principle of *Love* and *Conformity* to God. Then the Kingdom of God is come, and his Will is done in that Soul, as it is done in Heaven. Then Heaven itself is in the Soul, and the Life, and Conversation of the Soul is in Heaven. From such a Man the Curse of this World is remov'd, he walks upon consecrated Ground, and every Thing he meets, every thing that happens to him, helps forward his *Union* and *Communion* with God. For it is the *State* of our *Will*, that makes the *State* of our *Life*; when we receive every Thing from God, and do every Thing for God, every Thing does us the same Good, and helps us to the same Degree of Happiness. *Sickness* and *Health, Prosperity* and *Adversity*, bless and purify such a Soul in the same Degree; as it turns every Thing towards God, so every Thing becomes divine to it. For he that seeks God in every Thing, is sure to find God in every Thing. When we thus live wholly unto God, God is wholly ours, and we are then happy in all the Happiness of God; for by uniting with him in *Heart, and Will, and Spirit*, we are united to all that

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he is, and has in himself. This is the Purity and Perfection of Life, that we pray for in the Lord's Prayer, that *God's Kingdom may come, and his Will be done* in us, as it is in Heaven. And this we may be sure is not only *necessary*, but *attainable* by us, or our Saviour would not have made it a Part of our daily Prayer. It may now then justly be ask'd, have we yet obtain'd that, which we have been so long, and so universally praying for? Can we look upon the Church of this Nation, as drawing *near*, or even *tending* to this State of Perfection? Can we be carry'd to any one *Parish*, either in *Town*, or *Country*, where it can with Truth be said of any *one Pastor* and his *Flock*, that there the Kingdom of God is *coming*, and his Will *begins* to be done on Earth, as it is done in Heaven? Can we therefore find any *one Parish*, where the *Pastor* has not *great Reason* to reject the Doctor's Discourse, and to pray both for himself and his *Flock*, that they may enter *much farther* into the Spirit, and Practice of Christianity, than they have yet enter'd, that the Gospel may have *much greater* Power over them, than it hath yet had, and that they all may with a most awakening Conviction *see, and understand* what it is, that has made so *divine*, and *powerful* a Religion, so without its *proper Effect* upon them? For if the Case be thus, if we stand at this amazing Distance from that State of Perfection to which Christ has called us, tho' we have his infallible Promise to be with us to the End of the World, to assist us with *such Power* and *Strength* from above, as to obtain, and do every Thing that we pray for, through a *right Faith* in him, and Conformity to his Laws and Example; if the Case be thus, does not *Heaven* and *Earth* seem to call upon every *Minister* of the Gospel, to take *some Share* to himself of this *miserable State* of Things, and to endeavour to convince both *himself* and his *Flock*, that they have not yet been Christians in *true earnest*, that they have professed Christ with the Tempers of *Jews* and *Heathens*, that they have not yet entered into the *narrow Way* that leads to Life, that they have not yet enough *renounc'd* the World, not enough *deny'd* themselves, not enough

*empty'd*

empty'd their Hearts of Passions hurtful to Piety, not enough offer'd and devoted themselves to God, not enough made the Spirit of Religion the Spirit of *their Lives*, not enough sought for Strength and Deliverance from Sin, by a *firm and living Faith* in Jesus Christ, who is made *Righteousness*, and *Sanctification* to every Sinner that turns to God thro' Faith in him; not enough pray'd, and desir'd that they might be *born again* of God by the awakening and quickening the *incorruptible Seed* of Divine Life in their Souls, so that Christ may be truly said to be *formed* in them; not enough pray'd, and desir'd to be *every where*, and on *all Occasions* under the perpetual Influence and Guidance of the Holy Spirit, that they may think, and say, and do every Thing by his Holy Inspiration; not enough look'd to that *first and great Commandment*, of loving God with our whole Heart and whole Strength; not enough endeavour'd to keep the *next*, which is like unto it, that of loving our Neighbour, *as we love ourselves*; not enough renounc'd such Fashions, Customs, and Conformities to the World, as greatly corrupt the Heart, and grieve and separate the Holy Spirit from it. Now which way soever we consider the lamentable State of Religion amongst us, whether they be Evils *within* or *without* the Church, no Evil can be *remov'd*, nor any *Remedy* be procur'd by us of the *Clergy*, but in this *one Way*, That every *Individual* of the *Order*, from the highest to the lowest, being in right earnest with himself, open the Book of his *own Heart* and *Life*, and consider seriously in the Presence of God, whether, according to *his Degree* in the ecclesiastical Function, the World has had its *due Share* of *Salt*, and *Light* from him; whether all that is in the World, the *Lust of the Flesh*, the *Lust of the Eyes*, and the *Pride of Life* have been so *openly*, so *constantly* discourag'd, and renounc'd by him, that the *whole Form* of his Life has been one loud, continual Call to all Orders of Christians, to set their Affections on Things above, to mind only the one Thing needful, to have nothing at Heart, but to be in Christ new Creatures, seeking, intending, desiring nothing through  
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the Pilgrimage of this Life, but to *live unspotted from the World*, and to obtain every Height of Holiness, and heavenly Affection, which becomes those who are called to be Sons, and Heirs of God with Christ Jesus. If Religion was at this Time in a most flourishing State amongst us, abounding with such Congregations as made up the primitive Church, it would be *great Injustice* to suppose that the Clergy had not, under God, been the *chief Instruments* of building it up to such a State of Perfection, since they are consider'd by our Saviour himself, as the *Salt and Light* of the World, which are to preserve it both from Darkness and Corruption. Seeing then that an *universal Corruption* of Manners is on all Hands confess'd to have overspread this Christian Nation, and the *true Spirit* of Religion hardly *any where* to be seen, nothing can be more *reasonable* in itself, more suitable to the *present State* of Things, than for every *Clergyman*, where-ever his *Lot* is fallen, to suspect himself to have, in *some Degree* or other, contributed to this common Calamity, and to be *more or less* chargeable with the Guilt of it, and to try to discover his *own State*, by such like Questions as these, laid *home* to his Conscience. If Christianity has not done that to my Flock which is the *only End* and Intent of it, is there nothing of this Failure *chargeable* upon my Conduct over it? Can my righteous Judge lay nothing grievous to my Charge on that Account? Can my own Heart bear me Witness that I did not run in my *own Will*, was not driven by *human Passions*, but stay'd and waited till the *Holy Spirit* call'd me to this Office? Have I not undertaken the *Care* of other Souls, before I had ever any *true and real* Care of my own? Have I not presum'd to *convert* and *strengthen* others, before I was converted myself? To preach by *hearsay* of the Grace, and Mercy, and Salvation of the Gospel, whilst I myself was an *obedient Slave* to Sin? Have I not taken upon me to *explain* and *lay open* the Mysteries of God's Love in Christ Jesus, before they had their *proper Entrance* into my own Soul? Has my own *Repentance*, *Compunction*, deep *Sensibility* of the Burden of Sin, and *want* of a Saviour, taught me  
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how to make the Terrors of the Lord known in the Deep of every Man's Heart, and to awaken and pierce the Consciences of Sinners? Has my own *true and living Faith* in Christ my Saviour, my own Experience of the atoning, cleansing, sanctifying Power of his precious Blood, enabled me with great Boldness to tell all Sinners, that to the *Faith which worketh by Love*, Christ always and infallibly saith, what he said in the Gospel, *Thy Sins are forgiven; thy Faith hath saved thee; go in Peace?*

Can my own Heart, and God, who is greater than our Hearts, bear me Witness that in my sacred Office I have not sought *myself*, or my *own Things*, but the Things of Jesus Christ? If I have chang'd one *Flock* or *Station* for another, or added one *Cure* to another, have I done it in *Singleness of Heart*, as unto the Lord, and not for *myself*? Has all that I have sought or done of this Kind, been *only* from this *Motive*, and in this *View*, that I might be more truly *faithful* to him that hath called me, and be more and more *spent* and *sacrificed* for the Salvation of Souls? Have I neglected no Means of fitting and preparing myself for the Illumination of God's holy Spirit, which alone can enable me in any Measure to speak to, and work upon the Hearts and Consciences of Men? Have I earnestly long'd, and labour'd after every Kind and Degree of inward and outward Holiness, and Purity of *Body*, *Soul* and *Spirit*, that my *standing* at the *Altar* may be acceptable to God, and my Prayers and Intercessions for my Flock *avail* much before him? Has my own *Self-denial*, *Renunciation* of the World, and *Love* of the Cross of Christ, enabled me to preach up those Duties in their *full Extent*? Has my own strictly *pious Use* of the Things of this World, my own Readiness to relieve and assist every Creature to the utmost Extent of my Ability, fitted me to call others to these Things with Power and Authority? Have all Ages and Conditions of People under my Care had their proper Instruction and Warning from me, so that I have spar'd no Folly, Vanity, Indulgence, or Conformity to the World, that hurts Mens Souls, and hinders their Progress in *Li y*? Have I done



I done all that, by my Prayers and Preaching, Life and Example, which Christ expects from those whom he has enjoyn'd to feed his Sheep? Can my Flock by looking at me see what Virtues they want? Can they by following me, be led to every Kind and Degree of Christian Perfection? Lastly, has the Will of God and the Spirit of the Gospel been the Beginning and End, the Reason and Motive, the Rule and Measure, of my liking or disliking, doing or not doing every Thing among those People with whom I have liv'd as their Minister? These are a few of such Questions as the present State of Religion in this *Island* calls upon every Minister of the Gospel to sift and try himself by. For as the *Order* of the Clergy is instituted for no other End, but for the *preserving* of Religion and true Piety in the World; so when any Age is more than ordinarily sunk in Vice and Impiety, the *whole Order* of the Clergy, and *every Member* of it, have great Reason not only to be deeply *afflicted*, but greatly *affrighted* at it, and to suspect and fear their *own Conduct*, since that which is *their particular Work*, has had so little Success. They have great Reason to apprehend, that it is some Degeneracy of Spirit, some common Misbehaviour, some general Negligence, some want of Example, some Failure in Doctrine, some Defect in Zeal and Care of their particular Flocks, that *too much* contributes to *so general* a Corruption of Manners. This does not suppose, that it is in the Power of our Order to regulate the Manners of People as we please, it only supposes, that of all human Means it has the *greatest Effect*; and that when any Nation or People are either very good or very bad, the Behaviour of the Clergy may *reasonably* be reckon'd, to have *greatly* contributed to it. Let us all therefore of the Clergy, who have any *right Sense* of the Nature of our Order, any *true Love* for our Brethren of it, awaken and stir up one another to a faithful Diligence in our Callings, not such as may secure us from publick Scandal, and the Laws of the Land, but such a faithful Diligence as the Nature of our Office, the Spirit of the Gospel, and the present Decay of Religion calls for. Let us beseech  
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and intreat one another deeply to consider the great Need that this poor Nation hath of a *zealous, pious, exemplary, disinterested and laborious* Clergy; to consider the *dreadful Judgments* of God, that may justly be expected to fall first upon *our own Heads*, if this *true, only* Relief and Remedy is not procur'd by *all* of us, according to the *utmost* of our Ability. It is now no Time for *Ease, Indulgence, or worldly Repose*; all is to be renounc'd, all is to be sacrific'd; and we must in the *Spirit of Martyrdom* awaken the World into a *Faith and Love* of the Gospel. Now is the Time that we must *give up* all our worldly Regards, *for sake all that we have, that we must hate Father and Mother, Wife and Children, and Brothers and Sisters, yea, and our own Lives also*, or we cannot be faithful Ministers of Jesus Christ. The same Spirit which first planted the Gospel, is now required to *recover and restore* it amongst us. We must break off our Chains of *worldly Prudence* and come forth in the *Spirit and Power* of the Gospel; so live, and speak, and act whether in the Pulpit or out of it, that all who see and hear us may be forc'd to confess that God is in us of a Truth, and that his holy Spirit hath sent us. A *Ministry* that hath not *this Power*, that have not *full Proof*, both to themselves and others, that the holy Spirit is thus *with them*, opening the Kingdom of God in their own Souls, and enabling them to preach it to others with Spirit and Power, are to answer to God for their want of it.

To ask whether the Assistance of the Holy Spirit is to be *ordinary or extraordinary*, is as needless and groundless a Distinction, as to ask whether a *Minister* of the Gospel ought to be an *ordinary or extraordinary* good Man. The Operation of the Holy Spirit in us since the *Fall*, is a *supernatural* Power, and therefore in a just Sense *always* extraordinary, because enabling us to be and do that, which the ordinary Power of fallen Nature is insufficient for; but it is more or less restored to us, as we are more or less fitted to receive it. And all that *Assistance or Renovation* of the Holy Spirit which an Apostle might expect, for the raising his own personal Holiness to its *greatest Height*, or for enabling him

him with *Spirit* and *Power* to move, affect, and convert the Hearts of Men to the Faith of the Gospel, may be *justly expected* now by such Ministers of the Gospel, as do all that which an Apostle did to obtain and receive it. Our Religion is *founded* on this Doctrine,—that we are to be *born again* of the Holy Spirit,—that it is to be the *Breath* and *Life* of our new-born, inward Man,—that there is no *Sanctification* of the Heart, no *Illumination* of the Mind, no *Knowledge* of Divine Mysteries, no *Love* of holy Things, *possible* to be had, but in and by the *Motion* and *Life* of this Holy Spirit *renew'd* or *born again* in us ;—that its *Life*, *Motion* and *Power* in us, increaseth according to our Faith, Prayers and Desires of it.

Is it not now a *flat Denial* of all this to say, as is said by some, that the *Establishment* of the Gospel in the World, together with the Assistances of *human Learning* and *Languages*, has been the *Occasion* why the Assistance of the Holy Ghost is *abated*, and become only such as may be called *ordinary* ? For if we consult either Scripture or Experience, must it not be said, that *worldly Peace* and *Prosperity* want *as much* to be sanctified by the Holy Spirit, as *Persecution* and *Distresses* ? That *human Learning* and *Knowledge* need as *high Degrees* of Divine Grace and Help, as *human Ignorance* ? Is not the Blindness, the Infatuation and Corruption of *Men of Letters*, as notorious as that of *unlearned Men* ? Does an *Editor* of *Terence*, *Horace* or *Virgil*, receive such Illumination from *Plays* and *Poetry* ? Do *Cardinals* and *Pluralists* receive so much *Unction* and *Assistance* from *human Establishments*, as to need *less* to be led and govern'd by the Holy Spirit of God ? Or will we say, that a *critical Study* of divided Languages, and a Religion established in worldly *Ease* and *Peace*, are not only in themselves free from *Danger* and *Corruption*, but have so much of the *Nature of the holy Spirit* of God in them, that they can be to us in *his Stead*, and make his sanctifying Operations upon us needed in a *less Degree* ?

On the Part of God, our *Redemption* in Jesus Christ, and our *Sanctification* by the Holy Ghost, stand always  
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in the *same Degree of Nearness and Fulness* to all of us ; there is hardly a Chapter in the New Testament that can be understood, or its Doctrines observ'd, but upon the Supposition of this great Truth. If Christ is less *formed* in us than he was in the first Saints of the Church, if we come not to the *perfect Man, to the Measure of the Stature of the Fulness of Christ*, it is not because Christ is now become only our Redeemer in an *ordinary Way or Degree*, but it is because we have not *so turn'd to him, not so turn'd from ourselves*, not so counted all Things but *Dung*, that we might win Christ, and be found in him, as the first Saints did. If the holy Spirit does not now in *such a Degree* renew, quicken, move, and sanctify our Hearts, and fill us with *such Degrees* of divine Light and Love, as was done in the first Age of the Church, it is not because this sanctifying Spirit has committed *some Part* of his Work to *human Learning*, and so is become only our Sanctifier in a lesser and *ordinary Degree*, but it is because we ourselves have *forsaken this Fountain of living Waters, and hew'd out broken Cisterns* for ourselves ; it is because we have *griev'd* this holy Spirit, *resisted* his Motions, *quenched* his holy Fire, and under an *outward Profession* of Christ have kept up that *Old Man, with his Deeds*, which cannot be the Temple and Habitation of the Holy Spirit.

If therefore we have any true Sense of the Nature and Weight of our ecclesiastical Calling, any Desire to do the *full Work* of the Ministry, to satisfy the Wants and Necessities of our Flocks ; if we have any Fear of being condemn'd as *useless, insignificant* Labourers in Christ's Vineyard, it is high Time to awake from this Dream of an *ordinary* and *extraordinary* Sanctification of the Holy Spirit ; it serves only to keep us *unsanctified*, shut up in *Death*, in the *dead Workings* of our own corrupted Nature, to keep us *learnedly* content with our State, as if we were *rich*, and *increased in Goods*, and *had Need of nothing\**, and hinders us from knowing that we are *wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked*.

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\* Rev. iii. 17.



Several of the Clergy, whose Lot is fallen in this corrupt Age, may be suppos'd to have taken upon them the sacred Office, and to have liv'd in it, not enough according to the Nature and Spirit of it, merely through the *Degeneracy* of the Times, and from a Consideration that they are well enough, according to the *Measure* of Religion that now passes in the World. And perhaps there are few, if any of the Order, however eminent for good Works, whose Virtues have not receiv'd *some Abatement* from the same Cause. This therefore may be added as another Reason why all the Clergy of this Land should search into their Lives and Conduct with the utmost Severity, and bring every Thing to the Test of the Letter and Spirit of the Gospel.

The Christian Religion has not had its proper Effect, nor obtained its intended End, till it has so set up the Kingdom of God amongst us, that *his Will is done on Earth, as it is done in Heaven*. This is the Perfection that every Christian, when advancing forward in the several Degrees of Holiness and Purification, is to *tend to*, and *aspire after*. And if they who are to be taught, are to be thus separated from an earthly Nature, thus empty'd of all worldly Passions, thus dead to the Workings of Self-will, and Self-love, that the Spirit of God may be all in all in them, what Manner of Men ought they to be, who are to *teach, promote, advance, and lead the Way* to this Purity and Perfection? What a Distance ought he to be from every *Appearance* of Pride, that is to draw others to love and practise the profound Humility of the Son of God? How ought he to deny his Appetites, to humble his Body, and be steady in all Kinds of Self-Denial, who would convince his Flock that *they who sow to the Flesh, shall of the Flesh reap Destruction*? How heavenly-minded, how devoted to God, how attentive to the one Thing needful, how unspotted from the World ought he to be, who is to persuade others that they cannot possibly *serve God and Mammon*? How empty ought he to be of all *selfish* Cunning, all *worldly* Policy, all Arts and Methods of *Ambition*, who is to fix it deep in the Hearts

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Hearts of his Hearers, that *unless they become as little Children, they cannot see, nor enter into the Kingdom of God?* What open Hands, and open Heart ought he to have, what an Extent of Charity ought to be visible in him, who is to bring his Flock to this Faith, that *it is more blessed to give than to receive?* How remarkably, undeniably plain, open, sincere, undesigning, and faithful, should he be, who is to recommend, plant, and establish Sincerity, Plainness, Simplicity, Truth and Innocence amongst his Flock? There is such a necessary Fitness in these Things, that the Force and Power of Religion must be much prevented, when its Precepts are recommended to the World by such as excuse themselves from the plain and open Practice of them?

The Office of the Ministry is of the highest Nature, it is a Trust which no Language can sufficiently express; and the unfaithful Discharge of it is of all Conditions in Life the most dreadful \*. To be charg'd with the *Death* and *Blood* of Souls, by that God who laid down his Life to redeem them, is a Condemnation that will carry more of Guilt and Punishment in it than any other. Would you know the Office of a Christian Pastor, you must look at the Office of Christ; would you know what Manner of Spirit he ought to be of, you must look at the Spirit of Christ. For the Work of the Ministry is only the Work of Christ committed to other Hands, who are to supply his Absence, to be here in his Stead, to be doing the same Things, and with the same Spirit that he did, till the End of the World.

Nothing is so highly *honourable* as to bear a Part in the Priesthood of Christ, and be employed in the Work of the Ministry; but then it should be *well consider'd*, that it is only honourable in the *same Sense* as it may be said that nothing is more honourable than to suffer as a *Martyr*. Is is an Honour that is as different from all worldly Figure and Distinction, as the Glory of Christ upon the Cross is different

\* See *Ezekiel*, ch. xxxiv. and many other Places.

different from the Triumph of an earthly Prince: When therefore we think of the *Honour* and *Dignity* of the Pastoral Function, we should be careful to remember, that it is only the Honour of *dying* a Martyr, an Honour of *humbling, abasing, and sacrificing* ourselves with Christ; and continuing the Exercise of his suffering Priesthood for the Salvation of the World. The holy Function is often consider'd only as an *authoritative Commission* to minister in holy Things; but it is much more than this, it is a Call and Command to act with the Spirit of Christ, to represent his Purity, to continue his Holiness, to bear a Part of his Sacrifice, and devote themselves for the Good of others, as he did. A Priest that has *only* his Ordination to distinguish him, wants as much to make him a true Priest, as *Judas* wanted to make him a true Apostle. For tho' Holiness gives no Man a *Commission* to exercise the Pastoral Office, yet all who are called to it, are as much ordained and appointed to a *peculiar Holiness* of Life, as to the *Administration* of the Sacraments; and when they cease to be as *Light* and *Salt* to the rest of the World, they sin against the Pastoral Office, in as *high a degree* as they that enter upon it without any Authority.

For the sacred Office is God's *Appointment*, to continue through all Ages of the World, the Spirit and Power of Christ, for reconciling Men to God in the same *manner* and by the *same Means* of Holiness, Sacrifice and Devotion, which Christ exercised when he was upon Earth. We need no other Proof of this, than this one Saying of our blessed Lord: *As my Father hath sent me, so send I you.* That is, for all the Ends for which I am come into the World, for all the same Ends I send you into it, to be there in my stead, to supply my Absence, to carry on the Work that I have begun, to exercise my Power, to act with my Spirit, to continue the Exercise of my Love, and Labour, and Suffering for the Salvation of Mankind. To be sent by our blessed Lord for the same Ends as he was sent into the World, is such an Appointment of us to all Kinds and Degrees of Holiness, as can never be

be rightly discharged, but by our giving and devoting ourselves wholly and absolutely unto God.

Imagine that you had liv'd with our blessed Lord when he was upon Earth, that you had learn'd the Dignity and Divinity of his Person, that you had seen the Love which he bore to Mankind, that you had enter'd into the glorious Designs of his Kingdom which was, to convert the Inhabitants of the Earth poor Creatures of Flesh and Blood, into Sons of God, and Heirs of eternal Glory.

Imagine that you had seen him after his Resurrection, when he had redeem'd the World, conquer'd Sin, Death and Hell, and was about to take Possession of his Throne; imagine that then, in that State, you had seen him commission some of his Followers to be *Priests* and *Intercessors* with God on Earth, as he had been, to *feed*, and *nourish*, and *watch* over his Flock, as he had done, to go before them in *such exemplary Holiness*, such Love of God, such Compassion for Sinners, such Contempt of the World, such Poverty of Spirit, such Obedience and Resignation, as they had him for an Ensamble; had you been present at all this, how would you then have *heard* and *felt* these Words, *As my Father hath sent me, so send I you?*

What Sentiments of Piety, what Magnificence of Spirit, what exalted Holiness, would you have expected of those, who were call'd to succeed so great a Master in so great a Work? Could you think they could be fit for this Office, or were enough like him that had call'd them to it, unless they had *renounc'd* and *sacrificed* every thing for the sake of it? Could you think that any Care but that of the Church of God was proper for them? Would you not own that the Conversion of Sinners to God, ought to have been their *one only* Labour and Pains? that they were to seek for no other Happiness in this World, than such as their Lord and Master had done, but consider themselves as called from the common Affairs, Ease and Pleasures of Life, to be in Christ's stead towards the rest of Mankind, to conduct them safely to eternal Happiness? Now when we consider the Apostles in  
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this Light, as being the first that were entrusted with the *Care of Souls*, and from Christ himself we can see no *Degree* of Zeal, no Height of Piety, no Compassion for Sinners, no Concern for the Honour of God, no Contempt of Sufferings, no Disregard of worldly Interest, no Watchings or Mortifications, no Fervours of Devotion, to which we of the Clergy are not equally obliged. For the Salvation of Mankind, is still the same glorious, great and necessary Work that it was in their Days, is still to be carry'd on by the same Means, and is now in the Hands of the Clergy as it was then in theirs. If it was their Happiness and Glory to be faithful to him that called them, to forget the little Interests of Flesh and Blood, and have nothing at heart, but the Advancement of God's Kingdom, we shall fail both of Happiness and Glory if we seek it any other way. If an Apostle, considering the Weight of reconciling Souls unto God, is forced to cry out, *Who is sufficient for these things?* shall we think any Care but that which is the greatest, sufficient to make us stand uncondemned before God? It is a fatal Deception to imagine, that the Life of a Minister of God is ever to be a Life of Ease or worldly Repose. For tho' the temporal Sword be not always drawn against them, nor they forc'd to flee from one City to another, yet the World, the Flesh and the Devil, have perhaps never so much Difficulty to be resisted, as in temporal Prosperity, nor have the Ministers of Christ ever more occasion to put on all their Armour, than when the World is given up to Ease, and Peace, and Plenty; Swarms of Vice steal upon us, in these Seasons, the Spirit and Life of Religion is in danger of being lost, and the Salvation of Souls is made more difficult, than in the most perilous Times. And how is such a State of Temptation to be resisted, such a Torrent of Vice to be opposed, but by the Clergy's shewing themselves *visible* and *notorious* Examples of all the contrary Virtues. When Mankind are wallowing in Debauchery, wantoning in Pleasures, and given up to Vanity and Luxury in all Shapes, it is then the Duty of the faithful Minister, by his being crucify'd

crucify'd to the World, to proclaim himself the Messenger of a crucify'd Saviour, and to make his own self-denying, mortify'd, and heavenly Life, a *plain, open, and constant* Reproof of all vain Indulgences. For to yield to, or fall in with the Softness, Vanity, Luxury, Indulgence, or Avarice of the World, is the same Infidelity, and Breach of Trust in the sacred Office, as to depart from the true Faith, and fall in with some abominable Heresy.

I believe I need not now help the Reader to observe, that the Doctor's Undertaking is further liable to these great Objections against it. *First*, that it calls us from the *Sin and Danger* of being Righteous *over-much*, when we are always to own, that we are not yet righteous enough. *Secondly*, that it proposes to stir us up against *this Sin and Danger*, at a time, when this Nation is in Danger of the *severest Judgments* of God upon it, for a *general Irreligion* and Profaneness. *Thirdly*, that it tends to lead the *Clergy* from a *just Sense* of what the Nature of their Office, the Nature of Religion, and the present State of this Nation requires of them. That it tends to raise an *ill Spirit* in them, not only to be content with an ordinary common Degree of Piety in themselves, and their Flocks, but with a *watchful, and jealous Eye* to guard against all the *Beginnings* of an uncommon, or more than ordinary Sanctity of Life, either in themselves or others.

Thus says he, " To what a height of Fanatick Madness in Doctrine as well as Practice, are some advanc'd, who set out at first with an Appearance of *more than ordinary Sanctity in Practice only* \* ? ". Is not this calling upon the *Clergy* to beware, how they admit these *Beginnings* of a more than ordinary Sanctity of Life, either in themselves, or those committed to their Care? Is it not plainly telling them, that they must stick *closely and steadily* to such Sanctity of Practice, as may be call'd ordinary, or else they will be in Fanatick Madness? Here is no Force put upon his Words, a *more than ordinary Sanctity in Practice only*, is mark'd out as the genuine natural Cause

of *Fanatick Madness*, and therefore the *Cause* is equally condemn'd with the *Effect*. Had he meant that his Reader should not have the *same Dislike* of the one, as of the other, or had he been afraid of his doing so, would he not have put in a Word in Favour of a *more than ordinary Sanctity* of Life; would he not have said, that he did not intend to *blame* that, or at least not *so much* as the other? But not a Word of this, a more than ordinary Sanctity in *Practice only*, and *Fanatick Madness*, are consider'd as *Cause* and *Effect*, and left in the same State of Condemnation, to be equally guarded against, and avoided by the Reader. So that in a Nation over run with all manner of Corruption both of Principle and Practice, where the *ordinary State* of Religion has hardly the Form of Godliness, People are in *this State* of things to content themselves with *such a Sanctity of Life*, as may be deem'd to be *ordinary*.

And here I can't help addressing myself with great Affection to all my younger Brethren of the Clergy. According to the Course of Nature, you are likely to have the Care of the Church wholly upon your Hands in a short Time; and therefore it is chiefly from you that the Restoration of true Piety is to be expected in this Nation. I beseech you, therefore, for your own Sakes, for the Gospel's Sake, for the Sake of Mankind, to devote yourselves *wholly* to the Love and Service of God. As you are yet but Beginners in this great Office, you have it in your Power to make your Lives the greatest Happiness, both to yourselves, and the whole Nation. You are enter'd into *Holy Orders* in degenerate Times, where *Trade* and *Traffick* have seiz'd upon all holy Things; and it will be easy for you without Fear to swim along with the corrupt Stream, and to look upon him as an Enemy, or *Enthusiast*, that would save you from being lost in it. But think, my dear Brethren, think in Time, *what Remorse* you are treasuring up for yourselves, if you live to *look back* upon a loose, negligent, corrupt, disorderly, worldly, unedifying Life, spent amongst those whose Blood will be requir'd at your Hands. Think,

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on the other hand, how blessedly your Employment will end, if by your *Voices*, your *Lives*, and *Labours*, you put a stop to the Overflowings of Iniquity, restore the Spirit of the *Primitive Clergy*, and make all your Flocks bless, and praise God, for having sent you amongst them. Lay this down as an infallible Principle, that an *entire, absolute Renunciation* of all worldly Interest, is the only *possible Foundation* of that exalted Virtue which your Station requires. Without this, all Attempts after an exemplary Piety are in vain. If you want any Thing, from the World by way of *Figure* and *Exaltation*, you shut the Power of your Redeemer out of your own Souls, and instead of converting, you corrupt the Hearts of those that are about you. Detest therefore with the *utmost Abhorrence*, all Desires of making your Fortunes, either by *Preferments* or *rich Marriages*, and let it be your only Ambition to stand at the *Top* of every Virtue, as *visible Guides* and *Patterns* to all that aspire after the Perfection of Holiness. Consider yourselves merely as the *Messengers* of God, that are solely sent into the World on *his Errand*, and think it Happiness enough, that you are call'd to the *same Business*, for which the Son of God was born into the World. I don't call you from a *sober Use* of human Learning, but I would fain persuade you to think nothing worthy of your Notice in *Books* and *Study*, but that which *directly* applies to the *Amendment* of the Heart, which makes you more *holy*, more *divine*, more *heavenly*, than you would be without it. You want nothing, but to have the *Corruption* of your natural Birth *removed*, to have the Nature, Life and Spirit of Jesus Christ *deriv'd* into you; as this is *all* that you *want*, so let this be *all* that you *seek* from *Books*, *Study*, or *Men*. This is the *only, certain* way to become *eminent Divines*, instructed to the Kingdom of Heaven. And above all, the *Book* of all Books is the *Bible*. Attend likewise to your own Heart in which so much as you have of real, unaffected *Humility* and *Meekness*, so much as you are dead to your own *Will* and *Self-love*, so much as you have of *Purity of Heart*, so much, and *no more*, nor *any further* do you see and know the Truths of God. These Vir-



tues are the only *Eyes*, and *Ears*, and *Senses*, and *Heart* by which you will know and understand every thing in Scripture, in *that manner* and in *that degree*, in which God would have it understood, both for your own Good, and the Good of other People. It was owing to this *Purity of Heart*, and *Attendance* upon God, that an *ancient Widow*, named *Anna*\*, knew him to be the *true Messiah*, whom the *Rulers*, *Chief Priests*, and *Doctors* of the Law, condemn'd as an *Impostor*. Had they, instead of their Adherence to *critical Knowledge* and *rabbinical Learning*, been devoted to God in such *Purity of Heart* as she was, they had known as much of the Kingdom of God, as she did. Place therefore all your Hope and Confidence, all your learned Help and Skill, in the ardent Love and practice of *these Virtues*, and then, and then only, you will be able Ministers, holy Priests, and Messengers of God; your cleansed Hearts, like so many purify'd *Mirrors*, will be always penetrated, always illuminated by the Rays of divine Light, and you will no more need the *Crickets*, to tell you what God speaks to you in the Scriptures, than to tell you what God speaks to you in your own Hearts. There are indeed in the Scriptures *Secrets* and *Mysteries*, only fully to be known in God's own Time, and not a *Minute* sooner; are written by God, deep Lessons of Instruction to those who are attentive to him. Scripture consider'd as a Doctrine of *Life*, *Faith*, and *Salvation* in Jesus Christ, is a *sealed* or *unsealed*, an *open* or *shut up* Book to every Heart, in the same Proportion as it stands turn'd to the World, or turn'd to God. Nothing understands God, but the Spirit of God; nothing brings the Spirit of God into any Mind, but the renouncing all for it, the turning wholly to it, and the depending wholly upon it. *Human Learning* is by no means to be rejected from Religion, for it is of the *same good Use* and *Service*, and affords the *same Assistance* to Religion, that the *Alphabet*, *Writing* and *Printing* does. But if it is rais'd from this *kind* and *degree* of Assistance, if it is consider'd as a *Key*, or *the Key*, to the *Mysteries* of

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\* Luke ii. 36.

our Redemption in Jesus Christ, instead of *opening* to us the Kingdom of God, it *locks* us up in our *own Darknefs*. It is a Truth confessed on all Hands, that the Kingdom of *Grace* is the *Beginning* of the Kingdom of *Glory*; and that they differ only in *degree*. Is not this plainly confessing, that the Light of the Kingdom of *Grace* must be *one* and the *same* with that of the Kingdom of *Glory*? How else can one be the *Beginning* of the other? And must not *that*, which is to be our one only Light in Heaven in a *full degree*, be now our *one only* Light of all heavenly Things in a lower degree? Therefore all that we see and know of the Kingdom of God *now*, must be by that *same Light* by which we shall see and know the Kingdom of God hereafter. God is an *all-speaking, all-working, all-illuminating* Essence, possessing the Depth, and bringing forth the Life of every Creature according to its Nature. Our Life is out of this divine Essence, and is itself a creaturely Similitude of it; and when we turn from all Impediments, this divine Essence becomes as *certainly* the true Light of our Minds *here*, as it will be *hereafter*. This is not *Enthusiasm*, but the Words of Truth and Soberness; and it is the running away from *this Enthusiasm*, that has made so many great Scholars as useless to the Church as *tinkling Cymbals*, and all Christendom a meer *Babel* of learned Confusion. I shall now only add one Word more: A composed Gravity of Life, a suitable Decency of outward Behaviour, is not the thing that is demanded of you; your Piety must be solid, your Lives exemplary, the Perfection of your Virtues must shine before Men, or you will all of you in your *several Degrees*, stand chargeable with the ill State of Religion, that is about you.

I must now take Notice of an injurious Quotation or two that the Doctor has made from the *Treatise of Christian Perfection*. The Doctor quotes me as affirming, *That not only the Wickedness and Vanity of this World, but even its most lawful and allowed Concerns, render Men unable to enter, and unworthy to be received into the true State of Christianity*. And again, *that the*

*Wisdom from above condemns all Labour as equally fruitless, but that which labours after everlasting Life.* Then the Doctor affirms thus, *here's an utter Condemnation of all Trades, and of all Professions, of all Business and secular Concerns whatever\**. Does the Doctor then believe that I bought *Pen, Ink and Paper*, and wrote that Book, to shew that no Christian ought to *make, buy or sell Pen, Ink, and Paper*? and that I publish'd that Book to prove that it was my Opinion that it was utterly unlawful for a Christian to be a *Printer, a Book-binder, or a Bookseller*? Does not the Doctor know, that the *Christian Perfection* in the two first Pages, to prevent all Mistake, openly declares for the Continuance of Mankind in their several States and Conditions, openly declares against a *Cloyster, or any singular State of Life*, openly asserts Christian Perfection to consist in the *holy and religious Conduct* of ourselves in *every State of Life*? † Does he not know that in the *serious Call to a devout Life, &c.* which presently followed the other Book, the very *Title* declares solely for a *Piety adapted to the State and Condition of all Orders of Men*? But there is something still more wonderful, more regardless of Right and Wrong in the Doctor's Charge against me, for in this very Passage quoted by him, secular Business is expressly affirm'd to be *most lawful and allowed Concerns*. And yet from this Passage affirming the Lawfulness of worldly Business, and proceeding upon it as a certain Truth, the Doctor has extracted the Unlawfulness of all secular Concerns whatever. Again, Does not the Doctor know that he designedly mangled the Words he quoted, and left out that Part which shew'd the Reason of my so expressing myself? That I was there speaking to that Parable of our Lord's, where all that were bidden to the Feast, refused to come. *The first* because he had bought a *Piece of Ground*; the other, because he must *try his Oxen*; the third, because he *had marry'd a Wife*. Then the Master in Anger said, *None of these Men shall taste of my Supper*. Whence I thus observed, *this Parable teaches us, that not only the Vices and the Vanity of the World,*

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\* Page 15.

† Page 2.

but its most lawful and allowed Concerns, render Men unable to enter, and un-worthy to be receiv'd into the true State of Christianity. And does not every one see this to be the plain, necessary, and inoffensive Sense of the Parable? Had I not made Nonsense of it, if I had said, that *lawful Business*, could not become a *Hindrance* of Men's Salvation? For are there not here three *lawful Concerns* become three *Hindrances* of their coming to the Feast, and three *Reasons* of their being declar'd un-worthy of it? Then I go on to shew, that it is not the Employment itself that is condemn'd, but its being made a *Reason*, or *Excuse*, as in the Parable, for not living wholly unto God, adding these Words, the *true Wisdom from above* condemns all *Labour* as equally fruitless, but that *which labours after everlasting Life*. Let but Religion determine the Point, and what can it signify, whether a Man forgets God in his *Farm*, or a *Shop*, or at a gaming *Table*? Now what is there here condemn'd, but the *forgetting God*? Or will any one say, that a *Shop*, and a *Farm*, are here condemn'd, because God is to be remember'd in them, or because they are to be made Employments of Piety, that *labour after everlasting Life*? The Doctor proceeds to charge me with positively asserting, that all Christians are in all Ages oblig'd to sell all that they have, and give it to the Poor. I have been so far from asserting this, that I have with all my Might said, and prov'd the direct contrary, that no Christians of any Age are oblig'd to it. Speaking of the Command of our Saviour's to the young Man to sell all, and give it to the Poor, I have shewn, by Variety of Arguments, and Texts of Scripture, that that Command calls no rich Man to sell what he has, that it calls him only to do that with his Estate, which he is called to, by the whole Tenor of Scripture; as having Riches, that are not his own, of which he is only a Steward, and not a Proprietor, as being oblig'd to love his Neighbour as himself in the Use of them. That the Command of selling all, implies only such heavenly Affection, such Disregard of Riches, as is express'd, by being dead to the World, having our Conversation in Heaven, being born again from above, and having overcome  
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*the World.* From the Beginning to the End of this Matter, I have utterly rejected *all selling*, and shewn that it means only a perfect Charity, a *parting with the Self-Enjoyment of our Estates, to make them, as far as we are able, the common Support of those People whom we are to love, as we love ourselves, and as Christ has loved us.* The Doctor therefore in this Accusation, must be allowed to have stuck closely to his Text, he has not been *righteous over-much.* The Doctor makes now an Inference or two from this Doctrine of Charity. *According to this Divinity, says he, it is a Sin to be rich.* Here he is just as wrong as he could possibly be. For, according to the Divinity in the Book of *Christian Perfection*, and the *Serious Call*, &c. the Blessedness, the Piety, the Happiness arising from the Possession of Riches, is demonstrated from Chapter to Chapter, and visibly painted in a great Variety of Characters. Those two Books were publish'd chiefly to shew to rich Men their exceeding Happiness. And I can consistently say, that I should reckon it a Happiness to myself, to be one of the Number, supported only by this one Saying of our Lord's, that *it is more blessed to give, than to receive.* Another Inference the Doctor makes, is this, that according to this Divinity, *if a Man sues you for your House or Land, without the least Pretence of Right, you are bound to recede from your Right, and let him have it, rather than defend it.\** There had been as much Truth, and more Wit, if he had said, when *Thieves have any Design of entering into your House, you are obliged to have no Locks or Bolts upon your Doors.* For I have said no more of the Unlawfulness of appealing to *Courts of Justice*, to secure us in the just Possession of our House and Land, than of the Unlawfulness of going to a *Smith* for Locks and Bolts, when Thieves want to have our Goods. I take it to be as lawful to live under *human Government*, and to enjoy the Benefit of it, as to live under the Light and Benefit of the *Sun.* And I look upon *Courts of Justice*, which are to protect People in the Enjoyment of their Property, to be the first and chief Benefit of Government. And if they

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were absolutely unlawful, for the same Reason would all *Locks*, and *Doors*, and *Fences* be so too. On the other hand, I have said, that the abstaining from Contentions at Law, chusing to *suffer*, and bear with *Variety of Injuries*, where we might *legally* defend ourselves, and bring *Punishment* upon those that injure us, is a *proper Part* of Christian Self-denial, a just *Conformity* to the Meekness, and suffering Spirit of our blessed Lord, and highly beneficial to our own spiritual Advancement. And must not every one, that owns the Gospel, say the same? Has not our Saviour himself first said so? But does it therefore follow, that a Man has no *Rights*, or none that he may *own*, because it may be often, and in *many Cases*, a Matter of great Piety to suffer wrongfully with Patience? The short of the Matter is this: All Things that are lawful, are not expedient, nor edifying. Of Contentions at Law, most of them are very apt to do us great Hurt, many of them are piously to be avoided, through Patience and Meek-suffering of Wrong; but some may be necessary, even as Parts of our Duty. Is there any Thing more plain, or self-evident, than this? The Doctor might have observ'd, that I spoke of *Law-Suits* only under the Article of *Self-denial*, and therefore was only to speak of the Duty, Piety and Benefit, of forbearing from them; that there was great Necessity that this Doctrine of Meekness, and patient suffering of ill Usage, should be *fully* set forth both to *Clergy* and *Laiety*; that I had no more Reason to tell People that *Courts of Justice* were in themselves lawful, and such as might *justly* be appeal'd to in some Cases, than to tell them that it was lawful to live in this *Island*, and that they need not seek for a *Country* where there were no Laws nor Government to protect them. The Doctor has something like an Excuse for the *Weakness* and *Injustice* of all the foregoing Remarks and Censures, they are to be consider'd only as *little Dashes* of his Pen upon Books, which he says *are not considerable enough to be formally refuted* \*. Something like this I remember was formerly said by the Bishop of *Bangor*, now Lord Bishop

\* Page 22.

Bishop of *Winchester*, concerning my Letters to him. But his Lordship had the Prudence and Equity not to make *inconsiderate* Remarks upon Books, that he thought not considerable enough to be formally refuted by him. Into whose Head could it enter to think of *formally confuting Thomas à Kempis, Taylor's Life of Christ, or his Holy Living and Dying* ? Or what must we think of his Piety, who should say, that he only forbore such a Work, because the Reasonings in those Books were too inconsiderable to be formally refuted ? I desire no Authority for what I have written, but the Gospel, or I could soon shew that every Thing in my Books that offends the Doctor, is again and again to be found, not only in these pious Authors, but in the Writings of the most eminent Saints through all Ages of the Church.



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